

**2008**  
**Lieutenant Governor's**  
**Writing Awards Program**

**Fifth Grade Essays**

Sponsored by  
Lieutenant Governor André Bauer  
State of South Carolina

# **Regional Winners**

**Region One Winner**  
**Fifth Grade**

**Pee Dee Academy**  
**Marion County**  
**Gib Fenters**

**“In South Carolina, people really like to...”**

Strap on your boots and head to South Carolina. Get ready for some fun because down here we do many exciting activities. We enjoy fishing, going to football games, and getting together to eat with family. South Carolinians never have a boring day. When you visit South Carolina, you will always remember the smiling faces and beautiful places.

Boy, do South Carolinians like to fish! We fish for bass and brim. Did I mention catfish? We can fish for all these right here in South Carolina! Yeah, that is a lot of fishing, but you will love it!. If you visit South Carolina, do not forget to check out our fishing. You will not be sorry. I am positive!

Football is a major sport in South Carolina! When the Gamecocks play Clemson, every South Carolinian will be in the stadium or watching it at home. We just can not get enough of that exciting sport! Hey, did I mention when high schools play on Friday nights? Many people come out and support their team. From high school games to college games, football in South Carolina can not be beat!

We also love to get together and eat with family in South Carolina. Some of our favorites are chicken bog, fried chicken, corn, rice, and potatoes. We enjoy having picnics or going camping and living off the land. You must come and have a big cool glass of South Carolina iced tea! If you visit South Carolina do not just eat crackers; try our southern style cooking. It is Mmmm good! I am sure you will love it like a horse loves an apple!

Wow, it is pretty amazing to think about all you can do in South Carolina! If you ever visit, you will find some wonderful things to do. Try to take in an exciting football game or drop a line for excellent fishing. Do not forget to stop by one of our southern style restaurants for superb food in South Carolina. You will not regret it! Please, come and enjoy our beautiful, historic state. You will find smiling faces and beautiful places!

Calhoun Academy

Taylor Smith

Your little brother or sister is starting kindergarten next year.

What advice would you give him or her about attending school?

"Mom, do I really have to?" I asked her for the billionth time as I stomped out of the kitchen and down the hall to my little sister's room. You see, tomorrow was my first day of sixth grade, and my younger sister, Kayla, was starting her first day of kindergarten.

Since it was her first time at a real school, my mom had asked me to give her some "pointers."

I walked into her room and told her to sit down so I could give her some advice on going to school. I decided I would start with some of the basics. So the first couple

things I told her were to not cut her hair with her scissors, to not mix up the Play-Doh colors, don't pick your nose in front of people, and try not to put your mouth on the water fountain.

Then I decided to get some of the more important things into her brain. I told her that she couldn't have any of the toys off the playground, and to always make sure she didn't pull her pants down until she was all the way in the bathroom stall. I told her to never bite the teachers, and to never throw toys at them just because they didn't make the right sound effects during story time. The last thing I told her to never, ever do was sneak into the principal's office to order Chinese.

When I was sure she knew

everything, I left her room  
and went to mine. Wondering  
how I came up with all those  
things to tell her? Well, they  
were all mistakes I made  
in kindergarten.

**Region Three Winner  
Fifth Grade**

**Beaufort Academy**

**Beaufort County**

**Jacob Hincer**

**When I Am 80 Years Old, What Will My Life Be Like?**

When I am 80, my life will be interesting. I will be head of all five divisions of the Jco Corporation with my good friend, John. I will work in a tall glass-and-steel building and will choose when I work. I will spend most of my time designing and building robots, drawing comics, and animating cartoons. It will be the best job in the world.

Being 80 years old, I will be able to do almost anything. I will get a pilot's license and fly everywhere in my supersonic freight jet (which I designed). A quarter of our profit will go to the needy. Jco and other top scientists will grow super ozone that is virtually invincible to pollution. With permission from the world leaders, we will position the ozone in the atmosphere, hopefully halting global warming. Without that, there's one less thing to worry about!

In 2078, life will be much different. Robots will do the dishes, the laundry, and other household chores, including cooking. Jco robots will be in every home.

Transportation in 2078 will be much faster, safer, and more environmentally friendly. Cars will hover frictionless about an inch off the ground and run on clean burning hydrogen. Only one eighth of all vehicles will run on gasoline or diesel. The cars will be friction-free, so they can effortlessly reach 300 mph. The jets will be hydrogen-electric, and get from New York to London in less than two hours.

Isn't that amazing?

Now I've told you about everything there is to look forward to 70 years from now. Whether this will come true or not, I don't know. Just keep imagining!



**Region Four Winner  
Fifth Grade**

Spartanburg Christian Academy

Spartanburg County

Emily Edmonds

**Great (or Terrible) Advice for Kindergartners**

"Emily! I need some advice from you. I'm really scared about kiddergarten!" Yep. That's the first thing I heard in the morning of June 17, 2006, from my small brother. He was going to begin kindergarten in August. "Ryan, you won't start school for two months! Besides, it's pronounced kind-er-gar-ten, not kiddergarten!" I informed him for seemingly the millionth time.

"That's what I just said!" sniffed Ryan. "Honey, please give Ryan some advice and stop bullying him" my mother called from the kitchen where she was frying bacon. "Come on, Mom! Why do you always take pity on him?" I complained. "Wait a second," I murmured to myself. "Ryan asked for advice so I'll give him some advice! Some wrong advice, that is." I gave him a sly grin. "Oh, Ryan, come here. I have some advice for you," I called as sweetly as I could. "Weally! What is it? I wanna know!" said Ryan. "Well, first of all"...I dragged out the word 'all' for suspense. When I thought he was impatient

enough, I instructed, " Now, let's take it from the top. When you first get inside the school, run down the hall and scream as loud as you can. Second, go to every door on the hall and open the door say, "sorry, wrong room," and slam the door.

"When you go to the lunchroom for lunch pick up your plate and drop it on the floor. After that, start licking up the food off the floor. When you go back to your classroom, draw pictures on the board in permanent marker."

"While you are waiting to go home, crawl around on the floor. After Mom picks you up, act like a little angel. That's what you need to do." I concluded my lecture. Ryan's eyes were as large as dishes. "Wow," was all he said.

On the first day of school, when we picked Ryan up the teacher had a little conference with us. When she finished telling us all that Ryan had done, Mom yelled at Ryan, "Where did you get all those notions to do those things?" Ryan looked bewildered. "Emily," he whispered in reply. My mom turned to me with an angry face...That's all I remember of that week!

# **District Winners**

Abbeville County School District  
Long Cane Elementary School  
Jacob Schultz

What We Do in South Carolina

South Carolina is a great place to live. People really like to play sports and go to the ocean. We also like to travel places, eat good food and watch movies. The big sport in Abbeville is baseball, but personally I like soccer. All the time people around Abbeville start baseball teams and have tournaments. Soccer's not too big but it's coming around to be big.

Anyway going to the beach is really fun. The oceans are really nice in Charleston. People do so many things there like skim boarding, surf boarding and paddle ball. People also go there to shop especially women. One time when I went to the beach a jellyfish washed up on the shore. Sometimes when the tide is high blue crabs get in the tidal pools.

The beach also has really good food especially at Hyman's. It's the best! They have the best boiled peanuts and shrimp in town. Joe's Crab shack is good too. I think they have the best crab legs in the State of South Carolina. We also have good fried chicken in Abbeville. My favorite place to eat chicken is Miss Ann's in Greenwood.

We like to travel places outside the State of South Carolina too. The only bad thing about going up north is they don't have sweet tea. Everybody here likes to go see the monuments in other States. One time I went to Virginia and went to Williamsburg. It was cool seeing the way it was in the 1700's. But I prefer South Carolina as my home.

People especially like to watch movies. Here in our home cinema a lot of things are playing. My favorite movie is National Treasure. It's about man who finds clues in history to help find his family fortune.

South Carolina also has many lakes. There are five lakes close to my house. My family likes to go boating. I like to ride the tubes and I want to learn to ski.

Well it's fun to live in South Carolina and fun to do things that South Carolinians do. I think South Carolina is the best State in the country. The people here are nice and friendly. Well, that's what we do in South Carolina. Please come for a visit.

Jacob Schultz

**Belvedere Elementary School**  
**Aiken County**  
**Olivia Noelle Vaughn**

## **In South Carolina People Really Like To...**

South Carolina is such an amazing state. There are many things to see and do. Some people are engrossed in our sports, while others participate in various outdoor activities. People enjoy visiting festivals that occur throughout our state. Then there are others who adore the beautiful sites South Carolina has to offer.

When it comes to sports, the people of our state are very competitive. Most high schools have football and basketball teams that everyone in town rallies behind. Many rivalries develop among local schools. Since South Carolina has several major colleges, this means a division of team support. Yes, thousands of fans support Clemson Tigers or Carolina Gamecocks by wearing their team's colors and logos, attending games, and flying flags in car windows.

South Carolinians enjoy visiting historical and scenic sites. We are lucky we do not have to travel out of the state due to the abundance of history within. Many people visit Charleston and Columbia because they are rich in colonial stories and still have southern plantations. Since South Carolina is abounding in military history, war reenactments are also very popular.

Our state has somewhere for everyone to relax, whether you visit the mountains, lakes, or the coast. South Carolina has some of the most popular beaches in the United States. They are known for their beauty, as well as their abundance of shells and sharks' teeth. Edisto is one of the most popular beaches for discovering teeth and finding a variety of colorful shells. Hilton Head and Myrtle Beach are also two of the most popular beaches on the East Coast.

Outdoor activities are greatly enjoyed by the people of South Carolina. Weekends are often spent boating or racing jet skies. Some favorite pastimes for people here are camping and fishing; these allow Carolinians to enjoy the beauty of our state as well as the abundant wildlife. Hunting is a very popular sport. Hunters flock to our state in hopes of killing the perfect trophy deer!

We in South Carolina enjoy celebrating holidays and attending festivals. Several small towns hold festivals that include parades, street dances, beauty pageants, and craft shows. Some examples are Trenton's Peach Festival, Sally's Chittling Strutt, Aiken's Lobster Races, and North Augusta's Strawberry Festival.

Can you see why people have many things they really like to do in our great state?

Fairfax Elementary School  
Allendale County  
DeShawn Wright  
**When I Am 80 Years Old**

When I am 80 years old I see myself having a boring day in a Residential Home. I will be lying in bed watching "Sanford and Son". The days will be long and the nights too. I will not have many friends.

My hair will be dried out and gray like withered grass. I will be walking slowly with the help of a cane sometimes. Many days will be spent eating nasty foods. I will have to drink apple and cranberry juices. The nasty food I am going to eat will be rice, collard greens, and spinach. I will ask for some other kinds of food, but they will not give it to me. That just makes me mad.

Living in a nursing home at 80 years old will make me kind of mean to others because I had a stroke. You see the stroke left me where I can't do for myself and that can make an old man grouchy. Another reason I am mean is because they are feeding me nasty food. The doctor says the spinach is good for me, but I tell him spinach is for "Popeye the Sailor Man". Just because I'm old doesn't mean I can't have great food.

At 80 years old, I will be a retired Yankee baseball player. I will have a lot of money. I spend the most of my money on my mansion and children. I told my children if I spend money on them, they will have to bring me some great food and visit me every month. They better bring my grandchildren and great-grandchildren to see me too.

I think my life will be the "bomb" at 80 years old!

**Wren Elementary School**  
Anderson County  
**Sarah Wilson**

**Your little brother (or sister) is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?**

ABC! It's easy as 123! Come here, little brother, and sing with me. I have some helpful tips for you for next year. I know that you are extremely excited about beginning kindergarten, so I want to help you become prepared.

Tip Number One: Listen very carefully to your teachers because you might miss some important information if you aren't listening. Trust me on this one! I have witnessed this before, and it is not pretty. Actually, it has occurred to me before. Yikes! Talk about embarrassing. Tip Number Two: Always use your best manners when speaking to any adult at school. They will appreciate it, and they will think of you in a favorable way. Always be polite (even at home)! Tip Number Three: Be prepared to learn! I told you school isn't a big party, and you have to learn to become smarter. Unfortunately, you don't have a choice. It stinks, I know, but you will be thankful for it some day. Tip Number Four: Always do the best you can on your work because hopefully, great grades will come your way.

Eli, I know you are probably dozing off right now, but I need you to listen very carefully to these tips. Tip Number Five: Don't look on other people's papers. It won't get you anywhere in life. You need to be the "King of your own work." Then your teacher can help you with what you don't know or understand. Always mind your own business. Tip Number Six: Don't get distracted by other classmates. First of all, you'll get in trouble and won't be hearing or learning what your teacher is telling you.

Out of all of these tips, there is one special tip that is the best tip. (That is why it has its own paragraph.) There are times for having to be serious and times for fun. Overall, just enjoy life while you're young. Life goes by way too fast. You're young one day and then seventy-five the next. Have fun at school!

School is a great learning experience and you will always be thankful for it. You need to use these tips a lot because I'm in the fifth grade and I should know. Eli, I love you and know you'll do great in school.



**Wright Elementary School  
Anderson County  
Kendell Partain**

**“I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...”**

I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals just the other night during one of my unusual dreams. When I awoke the next morning I realized that my dream had become reality!

It all started when I was walking to school and I heard an unfamiliar voice yelling, “Get away from my delicious juicy snack!” Then another voice exclaimed, “Your food? I was here first!” I looked around and saw nothing but two tiny hummingbirds “beak-fighting” while hovering over a bird feeder.

When I got home that night I told my Mom about what had happened earlier that day. She thought I was just kidding around with her as usual. Mom told me, “It was just your vivid imagination Sweetie, now eat your dinner before it gets cold.” After I ate, I went straight to bed still wondering about the strange events of the day.

When I was cozy and snuggled into bed my cat jumped up beside me and began meowing loudly. My kitty whispered, “I’m hungry Kendell, feed me PLEASE.” I immediately sat up in bed with a startled look on my face. I asked him, “What did you just say?” My cat replied, “Hey! You heard me sister, now fix me some Meow Mix and make it snappy!” After that rude comment he relaxed on my pillow and waited. Of course, I snuck downstairs and made the snack without anyone else in the house being aware of my sneaky little caper. Later, we both relaxed and drifted off to sleep. I tossed and turned and dreamed of talking animals all night long.

When I was getting dressed for school the next morning I noticed my dog watching a boxing match on television. I quickly sat down beside him and heard him say in a scruffy voice, “Knock him out baby!” Then he added, “Hey sweetie, get me a soda.” I began to wonder if my mind was playing tricks on me. When I came back from the fridge with an icy cold can of soda he handed me five dollars and said, “Buy yourself somethin’ really nice.”

As I was leaving my house, I saw my two good friends, Hannah Wilson and Hannah Woodham, walking by on their way to school. In a burst of excitement, I told them all about what had taken place the past few days. They didn’t believe a word I said! Can you believe it? My two best friends doubted me, and now I was beginning to doubt myself.

At recess, we were playing kickball. After a hard kick by Blake, the ball suddenly rolled into the woods. I strolled over to get it and noticed a tiny red and black ladybug and her family. The ladybug family sang in unison, “Stop bugging us please!” I shook my head in disbelief, grabbed the ball, and returned to the game

with my classmates. As we continued to play, my mind drifted to thoughts of talking animals with bad attitudes. Before I knew it, the ball landed on my head with a THWACK!

"Kendell, Kendell, KENDELL! Wake up, are you alright?" In the distance I could hear a faint sound and it grew louder and louder. WOW! I realized that I had been knocked out by the ball and everyone was standing over me. Being the tough kid that I am, I stood up, shook it off, and went inside with the rest of the fifth grade class.

When I got home that evening I ate dinner and went to bed. I slept peacefully and didn't dream a single dream. The next morning, I felt great and walked into the living room to get my backpack. I saw my dog standing near the front door barking loudly and my cat was meowing beside his kitty bowl. Wait a minute, barking and meowing!!!! That means things just might be back to normal. No more animals using human words and sarcasm! Wow, what an adventure.

Iva Elementary School  
Anderson County School District Three

Kristen Brooke Norris

"I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals . . ."

"I was walking with animals and talking to the animals..."

Have you ever heard an animal talk? Well, I have. One hot, peaceful summer day, when I had just got through gathering the eggs, I started walking and talking with the farm animals. Of course they were not talking to me, but I was extremely bored. I started to pet one of our brave, red goats, when I heard an enormous splash in the pond. I jogged down to the pond to see what it was. Let me take you through my exciting journey of what happened next.

As I was walking, I saw a beautiful, white bird. It was about five feet tall. Once I got closer to the bird, it smiled. I said, "Hello bird." After that something weird happened. The bird said, "Hello my name is Wanda. What is yours?" I told her my name and asked, "What

are you doing here?" She said, "I came because I heard your thoughts. You have nothing to do!" I told her yes in excitement. "Jump on my back," she said. I hopped on Wanda's back, and she flew off. "Where are we going?" I asked. She exclaimed, "You will see!" On our way, she told me that she was magic. All of a sudden she hollered, "Hold on tight!" She zoomed through the atmosphere really fast, and we entered a bright, colorful land.

There were beautiful fairies and flowers that I had never seen before. After Wanda let me down, she told me to go play and have fun. There were waterslides and rollercoasters. Wanda took me into a logcabin and gave me some blue wings. When I ran out of the cabin, I discovered that I could fly. After I had all my fun it was time to go. I took off my wings and put them back. Next I climbed on to her back, and she flew off. In no time I was back at my house. She said that no time had passed while I was gone. I leaped off of her back and

trotted to the house. I told my parents all about my adventure. They would never believe me.

As you can see, I have had an exciting, magical day. I got to fly in the air with a huge bird to a magical land. Even though my parents did not believe me, I knew that it happened. I had a wonderful adventure.

Wrote in the air  
I got to fly in the air  
I got to fly in the air

**Mount Lebanon Elementary School  
Anderson County School District Four  
Adrianna Simmons**

**“I was walking with the animals and talking with the animals...”**

I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals. I was talking to a Mockingbird.

“What are you doing today, Adrianna?” He said.

“I do not know. I’ll probably do what I always do. Hang out with my friends,” I said.

All of a sudden, deer jumped out of the bushes. He was shaking all over; his eyes were wide with fear in them.

“What’s wrong, deer?” I asked, concerned.

“Wildcat tried to catch me to kill me, but I was faster and stronger.” He stood in a showoff pose as he said this.

“Ahhh! You are such a drama queen!” said Mockingbird, annoyed.

All of a sudden a roar came from the forest. Deer got out of his pose and ran behind him. Wildcat jumped out of the same bushes as Deer did.

“Where is that Deer?” He said angrily.

“Now Wildcat. Be reasonable! Calm down. Why do you want Deer?” I asked.

“He kicked my cub. She is limping.”

“What makes you think Deer did it?” I asked.

“Because my wife saw him.”

“Deer, is this true?” I asked him. “I want the truth.”

“Alright. I did. But only because she tore my leg,” he said.

I noticed he was shaking again.

“Let’s take a walk.” So we went down the trail.

“Now, Deer, why were you in Wildcat’s home?” I asked.

“I was not in his home. I was walking in the woods, making my rounds. You know, I am the Great Prince of the Forest. Anyway, I passed Oak Rock and she jumped out and bit my leg.” He said all of this in one breath.

“Well, that explains her coming from the forest,” said Wildcat.

“But that gives you no right to kick my cub!” He yelled.

With that they ran back into the woods, Wildcat chasing Deer.

“Wildcat, don’t you hurt him!” I yelled back.

“I’m not! We are playing tag!” He yelled back.

“That was weird,” said Mockingbird.

“Yes, it was,” I agreed. “At least they are playing nice.”  
And with that we walked up the trail.  
“Love a happy ending,” said Mockingbird.  
“So do I,” I said.

**Whitehall Elementary  
Anderson County  
Ashley Duffy**

**“I was Walking with the Animals and Talking with the Animals...”**

I was walking with the animals and talking with the animals when I realized animals really are better listeners than people. The way they look and the way they smile makes me feel as if they really can understand what I am saying! I'm Melody Singer. I work at Crystals Pet Shop. A few months ago my parents got a divorce. My world came crashing down like a lumberjack cutting down a forest. My mom and I had to move, and I had to get a job. I had no one to talk to. I felt like I was invisible. When I started walking dogs, I started to talk to them. One day I was explaining to one of the dogs my life and what happened to me. She looked up at me as if she were saying, "It's all going to be alright!" That's when I thought to myself, I really can get through this!

That afternoon I walked into the pet shop as Crystal was in the middle of grooming a dog. I asked her, "Do you think I could bring one of the dogs home with me?"

"You have been working hard. I don't see why not," Crystal exclaimed. "Go ahead and pick one," she said.

"Thank you!" I said happily. That night I came home to my mama with a dog in hand. As soon as my mama saw her, she fell in love with her.

She said, "Is Crystal alright with you keeping her?" I shook my head yes.

I spoke up and said, "This is the dog that has been getting me through all this. She listens to me and talks back with her eyes to make me feel better."



“That makes her even more special,” my mama said. After kissing the dog on the top of the head my mama said, “We should name her.”

“Hope!” I shouted. That fits her perfectly!

“We will go to the pet store tomorrow to get her a collar with her name on it,” mama said. I began to cry tears as large as ice cubes. “What? Is something wrong?” mama asked.

“No,” I sniffed. “I’m so relieved we could get through this with the help of my furry friend!”

Mom gave me a hug and whispered, “I love you Melody.” For the first time in a long time I knew everything was going to be alright.

Richard Carroll Elementary School – Campus B  
Bamberg District One  
Angel Broxton

I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals when they told me this story.

The Good Life

One day a boy named Tyrone was taking a stroll to his grandparents' house to give them some of the cookies his mom had baked. He was just two blocks away from their house when he heard a strange sound. "Tyrone, pssst, TYRONE!" the gravelly voice said. When he saw the mystery person, it was a rabbit.

The rabbit slowly revealed herself by pulling off the purple hoodie that covered her head. She held a shiny golden hat with colorful diamonds in her hand. The rabbit made some strange squeaky noises that Tyrone could not understand. "What do you want?" Tyrone questioned. He tried to understand her. The rabbit stepped closer to the boy and sprinkled some strange sparkly powder on him. "Wait! Stop! What are you doing?"

"Can you comprehend what I am saying to you now?" the little rabbit spoke slowly.

"Wow!... Yeah....But HOW?" hollered Tyrone.

"It is a secret. It's some kind of 'one time only' magical powers that we rabbits have and when they are revealed...we lose them. Listen to me, you can not tell any of your little human friends about this! Those are the orders of my rulers, the King and Queen of Rabbimania. Oh, where are my manners? Let me introduce myself to you, I am princess Shebia of Rabbimania. My parents, the King and Queen, left me here to watch the woods. These are my friends: Kayla Bear, Tom Cat, Sarah Squirrel, and Ruth Raccoon." Her friends appeared from the thick shrubs that lined the sidewalk.

"Wait a minute, I don't live here," he replied, pointing to his grandparents' quaint little cottage, "I am just here to drop off some cookies!" he announced.

"Weeeelllll," Shebia answered, "we need a prince!"

"I have my grandparents to worry about... I am not your man!"

"What are you talking about? We aren't letting you out of our sight without agreeing to become our prince."

"Okay. Fine. Can I at least deliver these cookies?" Tyrone whispered.

"No because tomorrow you will be crowned prince of Rabbimania."

The animals all pigged out on the cookies. The new friends had an enormous feast, and the food seemed to multiply.

"I'd better go home and get a good night's rest for tomorrow since I have a long walk through these woods again. "Good night!" Tyrone bellowed as he turned.

"Stay with us!" Shebia replied. Ty made a straw pallet. It was a peaceful night. Ty spent the rest of his life in those woods as comfortable as if it had always been his home. Tyrone now had the good life.

**Denmark-Olar Elementary School  
Bamberg County  
Savannah G. Staley**

**Your little brother is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?**

Do you know what advice I would give my little sister when she starts kindergarten? I would start by telling her how to be a big girl when she gets dropped off. Next, I would give her advice on how to behave in class. Finally, I would explain to her the best way to get along with others and make new friends.

As we all know big girls don't cry, but starting kindergarten can be a big step so it is okay to be scared. Don't worry too much because at the end of the day your parents will be back to get you. Remember that learning is fun, knowledge gives you power and we all want to grow up to be big and strong. So don't cry. Go in class ready to learn and have fun.

Secondly, it is very important to have good behavior at all times in class. Please keep your hands and feet to yourself no one else is the number one rule. I would tell her no hitting, kicking, scratching, spitting, shouting, or using bad words. I would tell her to raise her hand before speaking because little girls are better to be seen than heard. She needs to act like she has some home training because she wouldn't want to get a bad note home or put in the corner.

In school, it is key to meet new people and make new friends. I would tell my sister to always be nice and open to different types of people. Also to never judge someone she does not know or just by looking at them. I would let her know to always treat people how she wants to be treated because in order to get respect, you have to give respect.

In conclusion, when my sister starts kindergarten she will not be afraid to jump right in and learn. She will know how to behave like a young lady. She will make new friends and never judge a book by its cover.

**Williston 29 School District**  
**Kelly Edwards Elementary**  
**Katie B. Richardson**

### Advice for Kindergarten

Do you have a brother or sister, are they starting kindergarten? Mine is and he is dreading it. So, I decided to give him some advice: always respect the teacher, pick a good friend that behaves, and listen to the teacher at all times.

First of all, respect the teacher. You sure don't want to have to come home and tell your Mom you got in trouble. You also want to respect the teacher because it is good manners and they will respect you back. If you respect them you might even come home with a treat.

The next thing you should do is pick a good friend that behaves. Then you will always have someone to play with at recess. Plus, you will have someone to talk to and someone to sit with on field trips.

Lastly, listen to the teacher at all times. If you listen to the teacher you will be following directions. Don't ever talk while the teacher is talking or you might get written up.

My brother is finally cooling down now. He said, "Thanks for the advice, Sissy, I'll be sure to use it. I will always respect the teacher, listen to the teacher, and most importantly, I'll pick a good friend." I was sure happy to hear that. Now I can fall asleep at night without him waking me up every second worried about starting school.

**Barnwell Elementary School  
Barnwell County  
Anne Marie McCoy**

**Your little brother is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him about attending school?**

My little brother is starting kindergarten next year and, I have a lot of advice to give him.

Always behave in class. Never interrupt the teacher while she is talking. Remember to give mom your signed papers. Don't fight with other boys. Don't hit girls or the teachers. You will have a good year if you follow those few rules, but there's more.

Always, I mean always, study for any test that you have. Ask questions if you don't understand. Don't wait until you get home and ask mom for help. You're supposed to always pay attention in class. If your teacher asks you something, do not say no or yes. Say "yes mam" and "no mam."

If someone is messing with you, do not fight. Just walk away and if they dare you to fight, go play with your real friends. Please don't worry about girls. Finish your work, then worry. I do not care how tempted you are, just stay far away from girls.

You should always have your supplies in your book sack. Have all of your books for math class and social studies class. For spelling bees, if you don't know the word, sound it out. On tests, never ever cheat from somebody else's paper. When you have to color a coloring sheet, don't tell your teacher that you want to do something else.

Always write down your assignments so you will know what you have for homework. When you play games, don't ever disagree with the teacher unless you don't want your recess or you want silent lunch.

This is the advice I would give my little brother before he starts kindergarten.

**Coosa Elementary School  
Beaufort County  
Karen Workman**

**“In South Carolina, People Really Like to...”**

JoJo was flipping through a newspaper to find out about South Carolina since he was moving there in July. He wanted to know what people living in South Carolina really like to do. Fortunately, his parents had previously written to the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce for information about the state.

After a couple of weeks some material was received in a packet from South Carolina. The information highlighted what people really like to do when either living or visiting South Carolina. There were pamphlets on South Carolina's history and places to visit. For example there was information on Fort Sumter, the place where the Civil War started, and the first successfully used submarine sunk (The Hunley), both found around the Charleston area. Charlestown Landing, with a variety of animals as well as a water park to cool down is centrally located in Charleston.

Just a few hours down I-26 is Columbia, the capital of South Carolina. Located here is a zoo and museum. If you decide to live or visit here, there is a rule that you must never get bored. But fear not, this problem can easily be solved. First, you might want to travel to Myrtle Beach where there are plenty of miniature golf courses for the parents and kids, and then there are some of the most beautiful golf courses in the country for the adults, sport fishing in the Atlantic Ocean, amusement rides, restaurants, and plenty of stores for those interested in shopping, like JoJo's mom.

Next, for the outdoorsman in the family, the Blue Ridge Mountains are located up in the Spartanburg and Greenville areas. The famous Appalachian Trail runs through this mountain range where people enjoy hiking year round and skiing during the winter months. Finally in the lower part of the state, around Beaufort, is located Hunting Island State Park where people can enjoy camping, fishing, and swimming. There are three military bases located in the area. Rumor has it that the famous Blue Beard the pirate once visited Port Royal.

After looking over the South Carolina material, JoJo was anxious to pack his suitcases and move to South Carolina where the people like to learn about history and participate in a variety of activities like golfing, fishing, shopping, touring historic sites, or just relaxing on the many beautiful beaches located throughout the state. JoJo never dreamed that South Carolina provided so many exciting activities that people could participate in.

Sangaree Intermediate School  
Berkeley County  
Dean Gernon

**"I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals..."**

The year is 19,789 A.K.(after kings) It is the first time I have ever crossed the Calormen-Narnia border. My name is Ahlut, and I have come to Narnia to find and capture a centaur for the Royal Army. I have brought enough food for twenty-three days. Enough for now!

**Day two in Narnia**

I have found myself a shelter full of talking raccoons.

**"Hello mate!"** said the raccoon.

**"Aghh a talking raccoon!...Am I dreaming? Do you have a name?"** I asked.

**"My name is Sylvestor, what's yours?"**

I thought for a moment and said **"My name is Prince Ahlut from Calormen."**

**"Interesting! Well, now that we know each other, why don't you come inside and I'll get you some dinner."**

**"O.K."** I said wholeheartedly.

When I came inside, I noticed how small the shelter really was.

**"I can't fit through that."**

**"Yes you can! If a giant could almost fit through that door, then so can you!"**

**"Sylvester, can we go inside now? I'm really hungry!"** With that being said, he took me to the dining table. It was filled with savory pork chops, sweet honey, fluffernutter, and many other foods that one could think of.

**"Dig in!"** said Sylvestor.

After our feast, Sylvestor took me to a bed made of heather. It was the most comfortable bed I have ever slept on.

**"Good night young prince."**

**"Good night Sylvestor."** That night I fell asleep with a full stomach.

**Day three in Narnia**

When I woke up that morning, I said goodbye to Sylvestor and restarted my quest. With my mind on track, I started walking west hoping to find a centaur. When I reached Shanglimma, I noticed a recruitment sign. I joined the Narnian army hoping to find a centaur.

I decided to take shelter in a hollow tree. I haven't eaten since yesterday. I better find my bag of food. In my pack of food I had three oysters, seven sandwiches, and a nine gallon water bottle. I ate a fluffernutter sandwich and fell asleep ten minutes later.

#### Day four in Narnia

When I woke up, I ate breakfast and started walking.

"Hello, Mr. Squirrel. Do you know where the main army is stationed?"

"Yeah, it is over Shanglimma's famous bridge. By the way, my name is Bob,"

"Thank you," I replied as I started walking toward the bridge.

At about 7:00 I found the Narnian army and all its men and creatures.

"Sylvestor, is that you?"

"Hello Ahlut. It is me, Sylvestor. I have come to avenge my father."

"Who killed him?" I asked hoping to find an answer.

"A giant killed my father. His name was Ostrapoun. He was a nontalking raccoon from the Wild Lands of the North. My father was being hunted in 19,748 A.K. He took refuge in Narnia, and that is where he met my mother. After a week, I was born a talking northern raccoon from Narnia. When the giant heard this news, he came to Narnia the next day and killed my father. That is why ... to this day, I claim revenge for my father!"

"Thank you for answering my question, Sylvestor." I replied thankfully as I closed my eyes and started dreaming.

#### A new Day in Narnia

At about 5:17 this morning, the alarm sounded. "Sylvestor, what is that?" I asked in an inquisitive and surprising way.

"I think it's the emergency alarm! It means we're being attacked!"

Sylvestor exclaimed in a very grumpy voice.

"Giants midway!" someone called out.

"Finally my chance! Ahlut, be ready!! We're going in.

Everyone....ATTACKKK!!"

That was the last thing I heard from Sylvestor other than his last scream.

After five hours a doctor woke me up and told me the story of how Sylvestor avenged his father, but he died in the process. I shouted to the heavens, "Today is the worst day of my life!"

"No, young one, today is not a bad day, but it is a new day with good and bad occurring in between," explained Dr. Pilaf.

After his explanation he left me to my thoughts. From that day on I treated everyday like a new day, accepting the good and bad. All of this happened because of me, a raccoon, a quest, and a new day. I never found the centaur, but I did find the greatest thing in life, hope.



*I WAS WALKING AND TALKING WITH THE ANIMALS*  
**Guinyard Elementary School**  
**Calhoun County**  
**Rachel Johnson**

**I WAS WALKING AND TALKING WITH THE ANIMALS**

One day I walked my horse, Dream, around the stables. She is a white Gypsy Vanner mare with a caring heart. She saw I was crying, so she asked, "Are you OK?" I was astonished, and quickly ran to my trampoline, trying to find a place to hide. She came over and to my shock and amazement, tried to calm me. Finally, I was calm again and talking ....Dream was too!

When we were finished talking, I hopped onto her back, and we trotted into the woods. While she was walking I explained why I was mad, and that was when I asked her, "Why haven't you talked to me before now?" She replied, "I've never had much to say before now."

Then I heard someone coming! In a stiff and firm, yet friendly voice "RUN!" came blurting out of my mouth before I had even thought about it! Off we were, headed for home, and as fast as lightning! Suddenly she stopped in her tracks, and I flipped right over her head, hurtling down and hit the ground with a big THUMP! She quickly said, "Sorry, did I hurt you?" After catching my breath, I said, "It's OK, you didn't hurt me ....*that* much," as I put her in her stall.

I ran home and slept as soundly as I ever had. I woke up all at once the next morning, and ran to her stall. I was anxiously waiting to talk to her once again, but when I got there she was gone! I searched all around, but she was nowhere to be found. That's when I

**Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary School  
Charleston County  
Isabel Beeson**

**“In South Carolina people really like to .....”**

Down in South Carolina where the palm trees grow, we amuse ourselves differently from you other folks. When you take a trip to the South, the first person on the welcome committee is... Mr. 100 degrees heat! We have a couple of ways to beat the heat, and have fun!

To begin with, we love boating. With the wind in your hair, music playing, you can feel your problems and worries float away with the breeze and marsh scent. Or, if you are a dare devil you might be dragged or pulled on water skis, an inner-tube or barefoot. Sometimes when I go boating with my friend we hook up her I-pod and jam to music while dragging our hands in the water. So calming.

Next, you can go to the beach at night and walk the night away. Beware! The ghost crabs might come out. No silly, they're not really ghosts. They're just crabs that are ghostly white, come out at night, and appear to be gliding across the sand, like ice skaters on a frozen pond. The sound you will hear is the soothing sound of the waves crashing on the beach. It brings in the most marvelous treasures. Once we found a big chunk of brain coral. Inside were all of these tiny sea horse eggs. It was so cool, but we put it back.

Third, camping, fishing and crabbing are very popular here. The best meal ever is a fresh fish or crab dipped in hot creamy butter. Some people enjoy their boat every weekend and go fishing and crustacean hunting. I've seen lots of people on Saturday on the neighborhood dock. When my family goes crabbing, we always use chicken necks. That's right! Crabs absolutely adore chicken necks. I love to help my mom cook the crabs. We season them with Bay seasoning. Delish! I could eat them every week.

As you can see, South Carolinians enjoy a variety of activities. When it comes to family-fun and friends, we know how to turn any time into a southern adventure. I hope my little essay has helped you plan your next vacation. Preferably to South Carolina, home of the palm trees, sun, and fun!

Mt Pleasant Academy  
Charleston County  
Graham Crolley

## **When I am 80**

They think we're pointless. They think we're old bums lying in bed all day because we have nothing else to do. Well, that's pretty much what we are.

People always did wonder what had become of me after graduate school. I married and went to live in Pennsylvania in a tranquil town called Millstone. It had sweet, little cobblestone roads and inviting cottages surrounded by the great outdoors. Everything was normal and peaceful. Until it happened. The highway.....small car.....big overloaded 18 wheeler.....It makes my heart sick to think about it. But my wife had gone to a better place. And I went to the worst.

It was weird having to tell my son about how his mom died. Now he's 31 though, and he's a well known artist almost too busy to stop by and see me at this old dump. Yeah. I live in a crowded, balmy nursing home. This is my second year here, and it's as boring as porridge. Everyday I wake up, eat a slimy breakfast that's turning a bit cold, drink a tiny teaspoon full of medicinal nastiness, and sit and wait. Sitting and waiting for the maid, Lucy. She cleans the room. But after she is done cleaning everyone's room, she scurries over to my bed and hands me an item that means the world to me. And it's not gold. But it is as precious. It is a book.

She'll hand it to me and say, "Have fun," and wink. Then she walks away. I look at the book. Lucy usually gives me a book with the genre of fantasy with elves, mermaids, talking-trees- you name it! I always finish the book eagerly regretting having finished it. It was so good, and it leaves me wondering what the next book that Lucy gives me will be about.

I think the words of the books are magical. You hang on to them never letting go as they take you to places you've never even imagined. That proves the best tool man has ever invented is the pen.

Everyday I read a new book. They comfort me, and I let my troubles ooze out of my head helping me relax fully. You wouldn't believe how many countless adventures I've starred in. I've accompanied Peter Pan soaring through the air like a jet plane. I've splayed the menacing dragon of the Dark Forest. I've planted trees with good 'ol Johnny Appleseed. And I have to say I feel good about it.

In all my painful and happy years, I've learned something. You should be the one who coruscates when others are dull. They lie in bed and are wasting the last few days of their lives. But I, when they're sleeping, I'm not dreaming about when I can finally get out of this place and be free in the skies. I'm dreaming about the endless possibilities.

The world may be filled with boredom. But if you have the right mind, and the right book, the world is a whole different and happy place.

St. Andrews School of Math and Science  
Charleston County  
Grace Lesesne

Your little brother or sister is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?

The definition of school is different for many people. To you, it could mean the most spectacular thing you've ever experienced. To someone else, it could be The Five Days of Doom. But no matter who you are, you'll always know that school is the survival of the fittest.

Here you are, graduating preschool. Listen closely. I am going to help you get through your first year smoothly. I present .... Rules and Tips for School Survival! Tip number one - Come to school prepared. Buy books, pencils, folders, and notebooks at Wal-Mart before you start your learning adventure.

Tip number two - In kindergarten, your teacher expects everyone to be

dependent on him or her. Now, you need to realize that they have some students who need more than others. If you can help it, try to do the basics on your own.

Rule number one - Do not, under any circumstances, act up in class. Your teacher is like your mother at school. She will punish you.

Tip number three - Lunchtime is like the Bermuda Triangle - the trading is fierce. Keep something good with you at all times.

Tip number four - If you are ever at recess, and the bigger grades are playing ball related games, run as fast as you can away from them - I call it The Danger Zone.

Alright, I hope these rules and tips helped you understand school a lot better. Remember - survival of the fittest!

In South Carolina people really like to...

My beautiful home state has many attractions including tropical beaches, historical Charleston, and an abundance of natural beauty. There's a lot to look forward to in good ole South Carolina.

South Carolina is famous for its' charming beaches. Myrtle Beach is one of the more popular beaches. It has sandy beaches that glisten in the Southern sunlight, and Atlantic water cooler than ice on a hot humid day. There is also Hilton Head Island which has many activities, including my personal favorite, shopping. The beach there is very soothing and a little calmer than Myrtle Beach. The city of the island is a bit hectic but the outlying areas are serene and peaceful. The souvenir I purchased was a necklace made from a single grain of rice. A man wrote my name on it and put it in a tiny glass covering. I thought it was amazing.



Another popular location is Charleston. It is known for its historic sites. A well known and visited one is Fort Sumter, where the first shots of the Civil War were fired. You go out onto Fort Sumter, stand on a platform and get an awesome view of Charleston's coastline. A more colorful sight is Rainbow Row. There is a long row of beautifully painted houses. There are purple, yellow, blue, pink, green and any other color under the sun. Peoples' eyes just light up when they see these cheerfully colored homes. Something you can purchase or even just look at are the sweetgrass baskets. The ancestors of slaves still sit along the road weaving these baskets by hand for all to see.

Some folks who prefer natural beauty would also enjoy the lovely landscape of South Carolina.

Cedars Head State Park is an experience no one ever forgets. There is a scenic observation deck which overlooks some of the Upstate's most breathtaking views. Only a little farther away is Jones Gap. If you like to camp you should go there. Other attractions to these woods are the trickling creeks. They are great for catching craw-dads, or just wading. You will absolutely love the natural beauty of South Carolina.

If you want to come to South Carolina, you should look forward to these activities.

Maybe you'll have as much fun visiting here as I do living here. Everyone has a great time in South Carolina, the best state in the U.S.A!

Center of Literacy Through Technology  
Chester County  
Will Shugart

“The Dream...”

I was walking with my mother in Riverbanks Zoo when an announcement was made. “Gates will lock automatically this evening. Please, all park guests start towards the exit.” I looked at my watch. It was 6:58. The park closed at 7:00. We were smack-dab in the middle of the park, too.

Turned out we were locked in for the night. I turned around ---- and saw a wolf staring me straight in the eye! My mother fainted. The wolf growled, “If you want to move again, don’t move. Follow me.” Dragging my mother, he led me into a basement full of animals.

An owl greeted me at the foot of the stairs. “Greetings, human friends. I am Owl. This is Gander, Duck, Horse, Cat, and I see you’ve met Wolf.” Wolf bared his teeth and growled. “Join the party!” Said Owl. They were all laughing and drinking what I thought was root beer. Horse walked up to me and said, “In time you’ll see that Cat is egotistic, Duck and Gander are ummm...off, and Wolf will hang you for looking at him wrong.” Hen then walked off. I saw my mother get up ----and faint again.

From outside we heard a roar. Gander just burst in anger and said, “It’s that darn Bear and his minion, The Leopard! I’m going to kill them right now!” Duck looked at Gander and said, “Shut up Gander, you’re not going to do a thing.” Cat shouted, “I’m too pretty to die!” Horse screamed, “Why do we take this? We should counterattack this time.” Wolf said, “I agree.” Next thing I knew, they were all in a huddle, whispering. When they had broken up, Horse said, “Kid, on me!”

I jumped on his back. He ran out of the basement ---and stopped. Then lions, tigers, polar bears, rhinos, hippos and penguins all lined up beside us. Leopards poured over the hill in front of us. Owl yelled, "CHARGE!" Both sides charged and leopards went flying! Pretty soon, all the leopards were on the ground.

While we looked amongst the leopard casualties, there was one leopard bigger than the others. Cat said, "That's The Leopard, Bear's accomplice. We're cousins, but I'm much prettier." Owl rolled his eyes. A huge Grizzly Bear came over the hill and roared. "That's Bear," said Cat. Out of nowhere, Wolf and Horse charged him from both sides. He lay on the ground, hurt but alive. Cat then said, Beep! Beep! Beep! I woke up in my room. My alarm clock was beeping. I never forgot that dream.

**Plainview Elementary School  
Chesterfield County School District  
Heather Stewart**

## **Animal Talk**

I've had some amazing things happen to me, but the most breath-taking experience that has ever happened to me was when I could talk to animals. How's that for amazing!

It all started when I was walking in the woods behind my house. All of a sudden a blue jay flew past and said, "Hello." I jumped! Frightened, I looked around hesitating. The blue jay came back and asked, "Are you o.k.?" I fainted dead on the spot.

When my head finally cleared, he told me his name. It was Jay Jay. My mom came to see what was wrong. Jay Jay said to her, "Good day, Madam." My mom appeared not to hear anything. Mom helped me up and brushed the grass off my back. I asked her if she had heard Jay Jay say good day. After I said that she looked at me like I was crazy. She asked if I was sick. I replied with the answer, "No."

After mom left, I asked Jay Jay why I was the only human that could understand him. He said he would explain tomorrow.

When Saturday came along, I got on my golf cart and rode into the woods. Jay Jay was asleep in his nest. I tried to wake him by calling his name really loud. But, he didn't wake up. I looked around and saw a mouse. I told the mouse to scamper up the tree and wake him. In amazement, the mouse did as I said and woke Jay Jay.

When Jay Jay came down, he asked "What do you want?" I stood there with my hands on my hips. He said, "Oh yeah, the question." He explained that every woods has a communication system, and the animals would choose one child that could understand the animals. He looked like he knew what he was talking about, but I needed proof. He showed me this communication device that looked authentic.

He said that he had to shut down the communication system in an hour so they could choose another child. I was very sad, but it was the right thing to do.

We spent our last hour together by climbing trees. Jay Jay flew up them, but I had to climb up. He taught me bird language, and we called a bird meeting. All of us hid behind the bushes so no one could see or hear us. That hour together felt like five minutes.

We had to fix the communication system. While we were fixing the communication system, Jay Jay and I talked about what we did together.

When we were done, we cut the system on and said our good byes. All I remember was a flashing light and a screeching noise of some sort. When the noise and the light were gone, Jay Jay was still there. I said, "Jay Jay is that you?" The bird flew away, and then I knew Jay Jay was gone.

I really don't think much about Jay Jay anymore, but I occasionally recall who he was and the amazing things we did together. I will always remember the time I could talk with animals.

**St. Paul Elementary School**  
Clarendon County

**Brianna Nicole Dingle**

### **When I 'm 80 What Will My Life Be Like?**

Whoosh! Whoosh! Ahhh! I was riding on the roller-coaster with my 38 year old son Cedrick. I sadly but happily looked at myself knowing that it would probably be my last roller-coaster ride. I have not really planned my senior years yet. Here's what I think it will be like.

I plan to be wealthy and successful. My future all has to rely on my earlier years whether I'm a bum or a successful older woman. If I succeed, and get through school and not drop out of school, I'll be who I want to be I'm 80 years old.

I don't want to be wrinkly so I will buy products that replenish my skin. I want to be like my grandma. Two Words: Sweet and Feisty. She's 78 and she's terrific. I will live in a community were I can be respected and respectable. I mean who wants to live in a ghetto, raggedy, no respected, community? Surely not anyone I know. I also plan to be famous throughout the community for works and achievements I made in my

earlier years.

I plan to be very independent. I'm not going to be a widow though.

This is because I got where I am by myself by myself with God's help. I will

I will try to get places there and back by myself. When I am 80, my life will

be like a roller-coaster that is unstoppable: wild, entertained, and daring.

My life will be respected and fantastic. My life will be like no other 80 year

olds' life would be. When I'm 80 my life will be stunning.

**Manning Elementary School**  
**Clarendon County**  
**Leigh Fleming**

**I was Walking with the Animals and Talking with the Animals.....**

I was walking with the animals and talking with the animals on a summer's day. The sky was a soft blue color with specs of white clouds floating across the mountaintops. You could hear the birds singing simultaneously a song of summer. I had heard nothing out of the ordinary until I heard a "crack" as a leaf crumbled. Something jumped out.

"Ahh" I screamed as the tiny figure jumped out into the clearing. My mind was racing like usual before I have an asthma attack. I got my inhaler and tried to use it but it was still broken from when Katy, my little cousin, had come today. My cousin is five and had meant it no harm, but she broke it, and now I'm having an asthma attack. I fell to the ground and felt someone binding my feet while snickering to themselves like taking candy from a baby. I said "Who are you?" in a croaky voice because of my asthma symptoms. When I have asthma attacks it blurs my vision for about two minutes. The voice said "ELF Janesthen" in an equally croaky voice as mine. A minute later I felt something pour into my mouth. I had just gained my sight back when I passed out.

When I recovered from my spell I looked around. What I saw was awesome and unbelievable. I was in a gigantic cave filled with passageways that were covered with different colored gems lining the wall. What was so amazing was that they were in brilliant colors like sky blue, violet, and orange. After I stopped gaping at the walls, I noticed my hands weren't bound and for some reason I looked behind me. To my horror, my family was tied up behind me, even little Katy. What was weird was that they were tied up to the wall close to a gigantic hole. Right then, I felt someone bind my hands again.

They said, "If you ever want to see your family again then you have to give me two million dollars right now or you will be thrown into Pit of Piranhas." To my surprise I heard a fierce bark. It was my animal friends Jack, the deer, Tsali, the dog, Jordan, the skunk, and Rebbekkah, the mouse. First, they said they were going to save us. Then



Tsali came and attacked the elves with his teeth, and Jack used his antlers to help me out of my bindings, while Rebbekkah used her sharp teeth to break my families' bindings. I smelled something stinky and knew right away that Jordan was using his stink to distract the elves from us leaving.

When we got back we went to the "Awards Banquet for Good Things That You Have Done" and gave each of the animals that saved us each an award for their bravery. The banquet was held at the City Hall in our town. When they finished getting an award we all went to the big Outback Steakhouse to get a meal to eat. All the other people there had heard about what they had done in the newspaper and to my surprise wanted their autographs and they wanted mine too! We were pleased to give them our autographs but thought it was strange.

I wrote this story to remember my time with the strange elves. We never figured out why they kidnapped us and to this day I still wonder why. The animals and I still are great friends to this day and we walk together every day in those same woods. I haven't seen or heard of the elves since they kidnapped me.

**Walker-Gamble Elementary School  
Clarendon County  
Peyton Coker**

## **In South Carolina, People Really Like To...**

**In South Carolina people do many fun things. One of the things is hunting.**

**First of all, you can hunt rabbits. Rabbit hunting is great fun because you can socialize with your friends and still get to shoot the rabbits. You can also watch how beautiful nature is in the woods. You can see birds and other things, and if you are really quiet, you can see a deer.**

**Secondly, you can hunt deer. Deer hunting is great because it helps you be quiet and enjoy nature. You can see a lot of things deer hunting. You can see rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, and many other things. It is also a great time to spend time with your Daddy Granddaddy, or anyone who takes you hunting.**

**Thirdly, you can hunt squirrels. They are not the easiest things to shoot, but it is a lot of fun. When you look up in the trees, you can see birds and many other things. I go hunting with my Granddaddy, and we have a blast! You get to walk and talk about things and when the dogs tree a squirrel, just go shoot it. It is great exercise, just like rabbit hunting.**

**In conclusion, hunting is a great way to exercise, have fun with your friends and family, and enjoy the beautiful woods in South Carolina. I can't think of a better way to enjoy nature, can you? So, in South Carolina people love to do many things. In my opinion, the best one is hunting!!!**

**Forest Hills Elementary  
Colleton County  
Elizabeth Lucas**

**Your little sister is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give her about attending school?**

**My little sister, Laura, is starting school next year and I'm going to give her advice about school. You always need to be kind and respectful to everyone and everything. Pay attention in class because you never know when the teacher will call on you and ask you a question. Listen and follow directions. So, you know what to do. Treat others the way you want to be treated. If you are nice to them, they will probably be nice back. That is a little about what you should do at school.**

**School is where you learn, but you also have to behave. Don't talk without permission, especially when a teacher is talking. Follow the dress code. Just wear the right clothes. Don't ever run in the halls. You might trip and fall. Keep your hands and feet to yourself. You could easily hurt someone by accident. Help others. Open the door for someone if their hands are full. That is how you should behave at school.**

**Here are some more tips about school. Always be polite to others. Make sure you have all your supplies. You must have paper, pencils, erasers, notebooks, etc. Make sure you get plenty of rest, so you can pay attention without dozing off in class. Studying is a part of homework, so make sure you do it. You need to do your written homework, too and bring it to school! Just do what adults say and do your best. Those are your basic "Rules for School".**

**North Elementary School  
Darlington County  
Conner McWhorter**

**An 80 Year Old's Life**

Hello, I am an 80-year-old man. My life is not what it was when I was a youngster. These are three ways how.

First of all, my appearance has changed. Now I have a big, white beard that goes from the front of my ears down to my chin. I also, wear a gray sweater-vest with white polka dots on them and tacky, tan pants with juice stains on them. The most important thing that I don't like about my appearance is that I have a pale, bald head. I can't go outside in direct sunlight because the UV rays burn my head! In fact, I can't remember what kind of hair I had when I was young.

Other than my appearance, the house I live in has changed. In my new house, there are moving floors (which really help my back), a helper robot named XE5.2 that can wash dishes, feed a baby, straighten a tie, make breakfast, cook pizzas, and clean the house, and a jet pack just to get me from A to B. From what I can remember, that is different than the house I lived in when I was little.

The last main thing that has changed in my life is that now I have family of my own. I have a wife named Rose who is 79 years old, has green eyes, and white hair. We have one, 33-year-old son named Mark. He has brown hair and blue eyes. Mark works at the McDonalds down the street. He and his wife, Clarese, have tow children named Jack (boy) and Hether (girl). Jack has brown eyes and red hear. He is ten years old and goes to N.H.E. as a fifth grader. Hether is eight years old, has blond hair and brown eyes, and goes to N.H.E. as a third grader.

This is most of my life as an 80 year old. It has ups and downs, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

**Gordon Elementary  
Dillon County  
Taylor Lynn Cribbs**

**When You Are 80 Years Old, What Will Your Life Be Like?**

What will the world be like when I am eighty years old? There will be some major changes. We will have different travel, medicines, cleaning, food, and entertainment. I cannot wait!

When I am eighty years old, travel will be really different from now. When I am eighty, all you will have to do is push a button and "bam!" you are there. We will have time machines, too. Any day, week, month, etc. you can name, you can go there.

In the future, any medical condition you can possibly have can be treated. Since doctors will be able to treat anything, they will be able to keep people alive longer. People will be able to live until they are one hundred twenty or one hundred thirty years old. There will, also, be a cure for cancer, which is very important. People will be treated for all kinds of cancer.

Cleaning will be much easier in seventy years (I am ten now). When I am eighty, you will be able to buy a "maid robot." A maid robot will have programs in it to make the house sparkle! You can sit back and relax while it does all the work. That sounds great!

Boy will food be different! It will be a lot easier, too. It will be in a tablet. You will not even have to cook it. That seems excellent!

Do not even get me started on entertainment. There will be a holographic T.V. that has no limit to channels or volume (that is good because I will not be able to hear)! You will be able to watch anything and listen to everything. That will be awesome!

As you can see, when I am eighty years old, the world will be very different from now. Not only will travel, medicines, cleaning, food, and entertainment be different, they will be

a lot better. I hope I will still be able to enjoy everything. Eighty is old, but then again doctors will be able to keep me alive longer than expected.

**Latta Elementary School  
Dillon County  
Maggie Sloan**

**When you are 80 years old, what will your life be like?**

I am 80 and my life is as simple as it's going to get. In the mornings I set in my rocking chair and watch the morning news or lay in bed. I take my pills in the morning and set waiting for visitors. My family brings me things that I need.

When I turned 80 my children didn't want me to drive my car for safety reasons. I have five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. My grands are very loyal to me and they comfort me when I am lonely. I tell them adventurous stories and spoil them rotten. My children fuss at me for spoiling them, but that's what grandmas and great grandmas do!

I go to church on Sunday and sing fabulous songs. I'm very creative in my work. There's always a possibility that things would happen. My grandchildren pick on me for saying things like "Good golly Mrs. Molly," "Heavens to Betsy," "My stars and stripes," and "I aint getting any younger so hurry up." I tell them that is how everyone talked back then, but they don't believe me.

My life is full of surprises, and everything happens unexpectedly. So you have to keep your eyes open in my family. Over the years I have learned that my family can be aggravating, but they can also be God's little angels. They are my family and you have got to love them no matter what!

I have been very blessed over the years with my family. And I have memories that will stay with me forever, and no one can take that away from me. This is how my life will live on forever.

Oakbrook Elementary School  
Dorchester District 2  
Abby Ondrus

**When you are 80 years old, what will your life be like?**

I look out over the rain spotted window. The raindrops stream down over the glass like little rivers until they hit the window pane. They are continuing their way of life until- WHAM the new age smacks them upside the head. It is too upsetting to remember the day that happened to me. I try to find happy things to overcome the sadness. I look for rays of sunlight flowing down from the endless gray sky. They flow down like silk ribbons searching for my eyes. They find me, and my old wrinkled face lights up. I look over at my grandchildren. My emotions go downhill once again. They dance in their stupid space suits in front of the virtual fire. My old rocking chair creaks with age just as I do. The joints scream *I can't rock any longer!* But they somehow rock back and forth for hours more. I look at the crying window glass again. It reminds me of the changes. They are crowding in, surrounding me. I cannot look away. The young age that was once mine is gone, and it will never come back.

Global Warming has melted the arctic, and it exists no longer. My grandchildren have never seen a penguin or polar bear. In fact, they don't believe in them at all. They think of them like dinosaurs- prehistoric creatures from long ago. They call me prehistoric as if I was born B.C. I can't go to the beach anymore. The sun will melt me as it is. But the surface of the water is littered with cardboard, cans, straws, tires and towels. The shore's beauty was grasped and taken away almost as quickly as everything changed.

The new technology is too complicated for me to comprehend. Virtual reality seems to be the only way to play a television game. I tell my grandchildren we just used to have controllers. They said that couldn't be possible. There is no other way. When I was eleven, I dreamed of becoming a chef. To work in a kitchen all day and try out the food. But that isn't polite not to mention sensible. Microwavable is my only option. Take the wrapper off, pluck it from the plastic and onto a plate, and you're done. The food has no taste. I dare not look at the ingredients. Probably trans-fat galore, but no matter. It is all I can bare to do.



That seems only half the changes. But I can look on the bright side. I live in a futuristic age that I always dreamed of. Sure, it has its pros and cons, and the world seems to spin a mile a minute. I think of all these things, but then the sun bursts through the clouds. The rain stops and the rocking chair stops creaking. I still rock back and forth, remembering changing what I was, but I'll never be anything but me—even at the ripe old age of eighty.

**Williams Memorial Elementary School  
Dorchester County  
Brittany Simmons**

**Your little brother (or sister) is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?**

Hey! Is your little sister starting K-5 next year? Well my sister is. Read my story and find out what advice I would give her.

"Hooray," my little 4-year-old sister Jada said running in my room, "I'm going to school!"

"Slow your roll there," my daddy said walking by my room going in the bathroom.

"Yeah it's not that easy," I said. "Here's some advice before you go to school," I said. "You shouldn't hit anyone."

"Got that right, because you can be a trouble maker," my dad said walking out of the bathroom.

"Also try to be nice to the teachers and other kids." Like a rolling ball on the floor, Jada rolled her eyes and walked out. I chased after her so she could get what I was telling her. When I finally caught up with her she was sitting on the porch.

"Remember," I said holding up one finger, "to raise your hand and never blurt out."

"The most important thing is have good manners and treat other kids the way you want to be treated." I said.

Jada was a lazy sloth pretending to go to sleep on me. I knew she wasn't sleep so I kept going. "Have fun but get your work done at the same time."

"Are you done yet?" she asked.

"Ok, ok," I said, "that's it."

"Finally," She said.

As we walked back in the house, we laughed like monkeys in the zoo. "What's so funny?" my brother asked.

"Nothing, I was just giving Jada some advice before she goes to school," I said.

"Well maybe I could give her advice too," he said.

"Oh brother, here we go again." Jada said giggling.

That's the advice I would give to my sister who was starting K-5 next year.

**Douglas Elementary School  
Edgefield County  
Montrez Coleman**

**Your Little Brother (or Sister) Is Starting Kindergarten Next Year. What Advice Would You Give Him or Her About Attending School?**

If my little brother was just starting kindergarten and I had to give him advise this is what I would tell him.

I would tell him don't cry when you first get there and mom is leaving. If someone hit him don't cry but tell the teacher, and if they keep hitting him hit them back. Listen when the teacher is talking. Pay attention even when other aren't. Try not to laugh when class is going on. Don't let girls distract you from your school work. Do not talk back when the teacher yells at you even when you did not do anything. When it is nap time you better enjoy it because you won't get it when you get in first grade. Do not hag around with a lot of trouble makers. Do not get in trouble a lot, because when you are around someone that tells on you and you didn't do anything you will get in trouble because you always get in trouble. Do not take any weapons to school even if it isn't real because you can still get kicked out for that.

Do not tell a teacher something if another kid is getting in trouble. Unless you saw what happened and someone is being punished for something they shouldn't be punished for. If your friend is fighting someone do not try to jump in it, unless you see them getting bullied by a group of kids. Always remember you come to school to learn so don't play with you friend during class.

That's the advice I would give my brother if next year he was going to attend school.

**Fairfield Intermediate School  
Fairfield County  
Katelyn Haney**

**“I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...”**

Today my dad took my sister and me to the zoo. Since I am older now, I am able to walk around the zoo all by myself. Well, when we got there I walked over to the cheetahs, which are my favorite animal to see at the zoo. While I was watching them play, one of the cheetahs walked up to me and talked to me. I was shocked and scared. He said, “Let me out please!” I was looking around to see if I was being pranked. I didn’t see anyone. So I decided to sneak around to the back of his cage and let him out. I was praying that he wasn’t tricking me so that he could have me for lunch.

Once I got the cage opened, the cheetah said, “My name is Gonzo and I know that you love cheetahs.” I didn’t know what to say. Finally I said, “My name is Katelyn.” We decided to walk around the backside of the zoo for five minutes. Then Gonzo said, “Can we go to Pizza Hut?” I said, “What if we get caught?” He said, “Well, you can sneak me out.” So, I got Gonzo, we snuck out, and no one caught us.

I called my dad and told him that I had forgotten something and I was going out to the car. We walked for a while until we came to Pizza Hut. I hid Gonzo in the woods while I was inside ordering us a large pepperoni pizza. When I came out, we sat together in the woods, and ate our pizza. Once he was through, he wiped his mouth and said, “Thank you very much!” When we were finished I asked, “Do you want to be my pet?” And Gonzo replied, “Sure, I would love too!”

Well, we went to the car and Gonzo hid in the trunk. My dad and sister came out, got in the car, and we went home. I asked my dad if I can keep my cheetah Gonzo. He said, “Sure!” Well, he actually thought I was talking about my stuffed cheetah. I kept Gonzo hidden in the

shed. I fed him and took good care of him until he finally out grew the shed. That is when we decided it was best for him to return to the zoo. So I took Gonzo back to the zoo. I go to visit him at least once a week and I sneak him a slice of pizza every time.

Briggs Elementary School  
Florence County  
Grant Billings

**“I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...”**

I was walking with the animals and talking with the animals that had saved my life. The surprising incident all started one odd September morning.

One bright and sunny September morning, I left home early and ate a caramel apple at the park. My caramel apple tasted unusually delicious, and I was elated. Suddenly, a gust of wind of unknown source went directly into my ear. In the blink of an eye, deer and squirrel surrounded me and called my name. I was very confused, and my mind raced. And then the unexpected happened; I fainted.

When I woke up from my dreary sleep, animals circled me, screaming and yelling in terror. Through the chants and cries of horrified animals, I could make out explanations of an imminent storm that would be the worst ever. I paid close attention to everything I heard. People passed by me, completely unaware of the perilous storm that would arrive in just a few hours.

I decided to go to the local television studio and warn their meteorologists. After I explained the future storm, the weather experts deemed me crazy and sent me on my way. As I walked home, more and more animal chatter surrounded me as I realized the storm was upon my town. The animals told me to go to Town Hall and hide out there. At Town Hall, I was out of danger, but annoyed by the constant chatter of wild animals.

The storm hit with the might and power of apocalyptic proportions. Heavy rain, hail, tornadoes, and other things that accompany severe weather pounded Town Hall. The storm was absolutely *horrible*. Then as quickly as it had come, the storm disappeared. I talked with the animals and showed my gratitude by thanking them and playing with them. The storm was over and a sense of normalcy began to return to my disaster stricken town.

My new found ability saved my life. Without the ability to communicate with animals, I probably would have perished that fateful day.

**Hannah Pamplico Elementary Middle School  
Florence County  
Elizabeth McKnight**

**“In South Carolina, people really like to...”**

Have you ever been to the Palmetto State called South Carolina? It has so many places to go, sights to see, and things to do. Also, watch out for deer on the road -We have a lot.

To begin with, South Carolina has many fabulous places to go. To begin with, you can hit the beach and get a killer tan. You can go to a Clemson vs. Gamecocks game at the football stadium. You can go to Darlington Raceway and get blown away by the action. We have a wide variety of Tanger Outlet stores. Mainly girls will love to shop at these stores but boys may love it just as much as girls.

Also, South Carolina has many things to do. You can get on the wild Pee Dee River and try to catch a big fish, but watch out for gators. Or, you can roam the beautiful woods of South Carolina and try to catch a buck or two, but remember to wear orange. You can take your family down to the wild but wonderful Family Kingdom. Go ahead and ride the speedy go carts. Ride the huge roller coaster and scream your head off. Then, you can go to the arcade and win some serious prizes for all your tickets.

Next, South Carolina has many sights to see. To start with you could see the most amazing animals in South Carolina. There are many deer in the wonderful woods of South Carolina and if your lucky you might see a doe with a fawn. South Carolina also has a wide variety of beautiful birds. You can go bird watching and all you need is a pair of binoculars and bird guide. You can buy some bird feed from IGA. Also, South Carolina has lots of good vegetation. So you will see many beautiful gardens. First, you can ride through Columbia and see all the beautiful colors. Then you can go to the beach and see all the beautiful waves at sunset and feel the soft tropical breeze blow against your face. But if you're a wilder kind of person you can go to Eagles and buy a surf board and ride some waves. There are many more sights to see but you have to come see for yourself.

So have you made up your mind? If you say yes, then the magic begins as soon as you cross the border. If you say no, then you need to read this paper again!

## Advice To Give

Megan  
Parrott

If my little sister was starting kindergarten next year my advice to her about going to school would be...

(Tip #1) Always listen to the teachers.

If you don't listen likely you won't know what to do. That may cause you to get a bad grade. Try to do your best on that!

(Tip #2) Always do whatever schoolwork or homework you get. You have to complete schoolwork to learn what you're suppose to do and maybe even more. You have to do homework because it helps you remember what you have learned rather than forget it.

(Tip #3) Always be nice to others even if they're not nice to you. If you are nice to everyone you'll have a lot of friends to talk to and play with. Maybe the person who's not nice will be nice to you because you were nice to them.

(Tip #4) Always be yourself and have fun learning. If you be yourself around others they're going to be themselves too. This will help to have a better friendship with them. Also when you have fun learning you'll want to learn more and you'll get



Megan  
Parrott

better and better at things.

In closing, when you get older and look back on this you'll understand why I said these things. If you follow these four tips I promise that you will be successful in your life.

So give it your best in Kindergarten and good luck!

**Brockington Elementary School**  
Florence County School District Four  
**Katlin Graham**

**“In South Carolina, people really to...”**

Have you ever visited the Catfish Festival in Darlington, or what about the Pecan Festival in Florence? South Carolina is a great place to explore and visit. In South Carolina, people really like to do a lot of things that are fun and exciting. For instance, they like to eat food, shop around, and visit amazing sites. To reside in South Carolina is something that I'm proud of.

First, we eat wonderful food. One of my favorite foods is boiled peanuts. However, I must admit some food is not so good, like pig ears. People in South Carolina like to eat different types of food from different places. At the festival, my favorite is a funnel cake. My favorite dinner is from the Chinese Restaurant. In South Carolina, the food is very awesome, and there is a wide variety.

Another thing we do is shop around. You can do numerous amount of shopping. However sometimes it can get too expensive! There are a million places to shop at in South Carolina like the Magnolia Mall, the outlets at the beach, and the flea markets. Don't forget about the yard sales on Saturday morning.

Additionally in South Carolina, we can visit amazing sites. Some of sites are the national parks, historic places, and colleges. A couple places I visited are Lynches River State Park, and South Carolina State University. Some people visit the amazing sites everyday. They are so cool. If you are to visit you will not be bored, and you might even learn a thing or two.

In conclusion, we do many things that are fun. South Carolina is indeed a very special and nice place. There are tons of things you can do I just didn't name them all. I would encourage everybody young or old to come visit South Carolina. You will definitely love the beaches, the food, and the shopping!

**Johnsonville Middle School  
Florence County  
Jared Stogner**

**“In South Carolina, people like to....”**

In South Carolina people like to do many fun activities. We like to go to the Bar-B-Que Shag Festival. It is held in Hemingway every year in April. South Carolina has lots of concerts, like the Big and Rich and Lynard Skynard concert. Olanta celebrates the Gator Festival. We also like to celebrate the Shrimp and Jazz Fest. South Carolina also has lots of pageants. South Carolinians love to go shopping. There are many festivals, such as the Sweet Potato Festival, the Pee Dee International Festival, Coker Fall Festival, and many others. South Carolina Gamecocks and Clemson Tiger Football is a very big deal in South Carolina. Most people are either a tiger or a gamecock fan!

We love to go hunting! South Carolinians love to go deer hunting, coon hunting, fox hunting, rabbit hunting, and bird hunting. Fishing is also a huge priority to South Carolina. There are also lots of other activities such as the Eastern Carolina Agricultural Fair, Ovis Hill Family Farm, and many other fun things. The Pee Dee is always booming with activities.

During the summer, the beach is the place to go. The ocean is cold and the air smells like salt. The sound of the ocean waves will sooth you. The beach has many great restaurants to eat at. The beach is the place to go. There are lots of great hotels to stay at. I have always enjoyed the beach. In Columbia, the state fair is a fun place to go. You can enjoy lots of different foods such as funnel cakes, lemonade, snow cones, and other great things. South Carolina is the place to be.

**"I was walking with the animals and talking to them"....**

**WOW! Let me catch my breath and tell you what happened at the zoo today. Here we go!**

**Finally, my daddy, 3-year old cousin Nia, and I arrived at the River Bank Zoo in Columbia. We stepped out of the car into the blazing heat and decided to get some ice cream to cool us off. The line was very long. I gazed at a couple of red squirrels scurrying up a tree and suddenly I heard talking. "WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?" It was coming from the squirrels! I wiped my eyes and decided that my mind was playing tricks on me. "It's the heat," I repeated to myself. When we got to the front of the line I ordered a triple scoop of chocolate ice cream. As I waited for the ice cream to be fixed, I looked down at a herd of ants. "Hey watch it, you don't see me stomping around on YOU!" Yelled the Queen Ant. "So...rr..y!" I said shyly. I grabbed my ice cream and gulped it down to cool myself off. The animals I've met so far are very cruel and ruthless.**

**After my daddy and Nia finished their ice cream we bought our tickets. I started to tell them what I heard but I stopped myself because they would think I'm really losing it! So I stayed quiet and waited for a chance to tell them about the talking animals. We started the adventure. First, we saw the lions. "I would love to have a girl dinner," roared the male lion. "Did you hear that?" I said wearily as I pointed to the lion cage. "Hear what?" they asked. "THE LIONS! THEY SAID THEY'D LIKE ME TO BE THEIR DINNER!" "You are so funny Amani," Nia said laughing. Nobody believed**

**me, they thought I was nuts! "It's the heat. It's the heat." I repeated to myself over and over. "What do you mean the heat?" my dad asked curiously. This was going to be a long trip.**

**As we moved along, the animals got much nicer. We stopped at the giraffes to take pictures. What a perfect moment. "It would be even better if I had one of those nice apples from in the tree." I thought out loud. Then three red apples fell into my lap. "A few less apples wouldn't hurt," said the giraffe. "Thank you." I said trying not to let Nia and my dad hear me. Next, we saw the elephants. We.... RING-RING! I sat straight up in bed on realized it was just a dream. Can you believe it!!! That was an adventure I'd never forget!!!**

Brushy Creek Elementary School  
Greenville School District  
Kathryn Dreyfus

## When I'm 80 years old my life will be like...

I now believe I have lived eighty wondrous and blissful years in which I am grateful. At my age you become thankful for the little things the world has given you that most people never notice such as the rain. The rain ceases. It slides down my windowsill and I feel less alone. I clutch my sacred journal where my memories sleep, waiting to be awakened by the turning of each page. I enter my garden, a place very special to me, for here I am able to be myself. I drop to my feet and whisper my praise to God.

"Thou hast given thee ingenuity. Respect and praise overflow with these words. It is a glorious miracle to know thou art not just thy king but also thy life, love, and friend. I give thou everything."

After my prayer, the walk to my chrysanthemums was easier than ever. The wind blows overhead. I realize this is a thank you. I am weak and old but a fire burns inside me every time I tell my story.

When I was eight years old it began. I wiped my forehead from the horrid heat. God was listening. I had enough of being bullied. Someone had wronged me and wouldn't even apologize, not mentioning when I was five I was abused. I had cried.

Whoosh. The wind blew over me in a comforting manner. The wind blew up a hill, and I followed it. Once on the hilltop the wind ceased and in front of me, tall trees created shade. I laid down my head and rested. Instantly my aches were at ease. How was it possible that I no longer experienced pain? I then thought of my God. I spoke aloud to the wind, that if the wind was indeed my God, to rustle a few leaves. To my surprise a couple of leaves fell downward. I felt as if my arms turned to wings and I could leave my troublesome life, and fly in the wandering wind, which I would call a coveted home. There I would empty my mind of horrid memories which lay eschew. After that I knew God was with me.

I am still that same person today. I now spend my frail days in my garden with the wind. Other days I tell my story. I am eighty years old. I am grateful.

**Bell's Crossing Elementary**  
**Greenville County**  
Lori North

## I Was Walking With the Animals and Talking With the Animals

Squeak, squeak. My old converse sneakers, wet from the rain, squeaked as they carried me up the steps of the bus. I plopped myself down in the very first seat and began reading *Stepping on the Cracks* by my favorite author, Mary Downing Hahn. The bus jerked forward and eased out of the parking lot. My first day in a new school had not been fun.

As the bus turned the corner onto my street, I thought about how I left all my friends. Everyone hated me here ---- at least it felt that way.

The bus halted and I sprung up from my seat, only to stumble from the rush behind me. I steadied myself and clambered down the steps. I trudged along the road towards home. At this moment I would've given anything for a ride down Davis Road. It wasn't my fault that stupid old bus is too lazy to make a stop closer to my house.

"You look down, or sad," someone said.

I whirled around, "Who said that?" I demanded. But all I saw was a little chipmunk following me. "Stupid forest animals," I muttered.

"That's an insult!" that voice yelled at me. That's when I realized I'd met a talking chipmunk. I'd guessed it was a dream.

"I don't care if I offended you! You offended me! I'm talking to a chipmunk!" I exclaimed.

"Okay, one: I'm not a chipmunk, I'm a squirrel. Do I look like a chipmunk to you?" it said.

"Hmmm, let me think ---- yeah," I answered.

Then it said, "Alrighty then, two: my name is Marty. You look sad."

That's when another squirrel joined us. Her name was Mary.

We walked and talked, but it was starting to drive me crazy. I walked and talked with animals!

"That's my house," I told them, pointing to the end of the drive. We stood there a while. I was glad to meet them, they helped me think things through, and they were someone to talk to.

"We should do this everyday," I said. They agreed.

"We should have a club!" said Marty.

"Yeah!" said Mary. So I agreed as well. I couldn't hurt their feelings!

I dashed up to my house and on the porch I whipped off my sneakers.

"Bye," I called, but they were gone. Were they imaginary? Something too bizarre to be real? Maybe they were, maybe they weren't, but it did make me feel better.

**Augusta Circle Elementary  
Greenville County  
Hannah Voyles**

**I was Walking with the Animals and Talking to the Animals**

Timmy's mom heard the door slam shut. "Timmy, is that you?" she asked. Timmy's mom had beautiful brown bouncy hair, and Timmy was just Timmy.

"Yes mom," said Timmy.

"Do you know what time it is?" asked Timmy's mom angrily. Timmy looked at the clock.

"Oh no!" he shouted. He had come in twenty minutes late from the hockey game his mom had told him absolutely not to attend.

"Where were you?" asked Timmy's mom.

"Well..." Timmy said taking a pause to think of what to say, "I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals."

"What?" asked Timmy's mom, looking confused.

"Yeah mom, there was a chipmunk, and uhhhh a dog, and oh yeah, a blue bird," said Timmy. "The dog was hungry, so I went down to the Down Town Butcher Shoppe and got him a big, juicy steak. After that, Jay..."

"Wait, who is Jay?" asked Timmy's mom.

"Uhhhhhhhhhhh," said Timmy. Jay was one of Timmy's friends who was at the hockey game. "Jay is the blue bird, as in blue *jay*. He wanted me to call him that name. Anyway, I had to help Jay find a good tree to live in, and we gathered some twigs, sticks, and other materials to make a nest. Then the chipmunk said that its house was very hard, so I gave it our softest blanket. See mom, I was late because I was helping pour little animals," said Timmy.

"Well then, why don't you take your little animal friends to your room? YOU ARE GROUNDED!" demanded Timmy's mom.

"How did you figure it out?" asked Timmy.

"Our softest blanket is still in the trunk. Anyway, you can not have any TV or video games for a month," said Timmy's mom. Timmy stomped up the stairs. He looked out the window and saw a chipmunk, a blue bird, and a dog.

"This is all your fault," grumbled Timmy.



**East End Elementary   Greenwood District 50  
Austin Ridge**

**In South Carolina People Really Like to.....**

Gulp! Gulp! “Oh waiter.....I need some more iced tea.”  
“Yo, waiter.....I need some sweet tea over here!” I LOVE SWEET  
TEA!!! I mean, what South Carolinian doesn’t like sweet tea? Everybody  
drinks it.....unless you live in Georgia.

Drinking sweet tea is like drinking gold water out of a diamond cup.  
Everybody drinks sweet tea except those Yankees! They dumped all their  
tea into Boston Harbor. When they do drink tea they drink it hot. If you go  
to the North you can’t just go up to the counter and say “get me a big glass  
of sweet tea.” They would just laugh and say they don’t have that on the  
menu.

In the South we drink sweet tea all times of the day. You can drink it  
for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Every time we go to my grandma’s house to  
eat dinner we drink sweet tea (of course). Let’s face the truth.... in South  
Carolina we love our sweet tea.

Well, I am glad I live in South Carolina. One reason is that I know  
that I won’t be charged for anything like having my ancestor dump tea in the  
harbor. The second reason it that I can have a glass of cold sweet tea any  
time I want it. That’s why I love living in South Carolina. Gulp! Gulp!  
Pass me some more iced sweet tea please.

Ware Shoals Elementary School  
Greenwood School District 51  
Nathan Lowe

★Ware Shoals Elementary★  
Greenwood County

"In South Carolina, people really like to..."

In South Carolina really like to go to the beach. There are many different beaches you can go to, here are a few: Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head, and Folly Beach. When you go to the beach, these are things we South Carolinians like to do: go swimming, build sandcastles, walk down the beach, and listen to music.

People also like to grill out or have barbecues. I've been to a few myself and let me tell you something, it's a lot of fun. We have games, (backyard football, tag, hide-and-go-seek, and more) food, (cheeseburgers, fries, baked potatoes, fried chicken) and good old southern hospitality.

Another thing we do down here is drag race. Even a small town like Ware Shoals has a drag strip. We have locals, amateurs, and maybe a pro or two now and then. It is awesome! At the races we have music, (country of course) food, (hot wings, sandwiches, etc.) cold drinks, (sodas, etc.) and a whole lot of fun in the sun!

We all like seeing and/or playing football too. I have played for three years in Greenwood, Parks, and Rec. One popular way to do this is tailgating. When we tailgate, we eat and talk and play a little backyard football.

Here's a good one! People in South Carolina really like to mud ride. We take our biggest, badest, and dirtiest trucks to mud ride. In this fun activity, trucks race down into a mudpit and try to get all the way to the other side.

We also like to swim. It's one of South Carolina's pride and joy kind of things.

In my hometown of W.S., I have a large in ground pool. In the summer, we all go swimming. We take our radios, turn them on, and play some beach volleyball.

Well, that's only a little bit of the stuff we do here in South Carolina. There is a lot more stuff. Maybe you should come and see for yourself. Take a vacation to the beautiful, sunny, warm Palmetto State, South Carolina, and find out what we like to do in South Carolina.

Ninety Six Elementary School  
Greenwood District 52  
Lydia Hatcher

## When I Am 80 Years Old, My Life Will Be...

"Children, gather around to hear a story or two of when your old grandma was a little girl."

"How little Grandma?" asked sweet Clara.

"As little as a baby until I was ten years old. Now listen to these stories."

"When I was a little baby we had a dog. Her name was Sidney and she was a very big dog. When my sister and I were born the dog became jealous because we got more attention from our parents.."

"How could anyone be jealous of you, Grandma?"

"Well, remember I was little and before I was born they gave all their love to Sidney," replied the old lady.

"Soon Sidney died, but your great-great-grandpa's dog had a litter of puppies."

"How old were you then?" asked Kevin.

"About seven years old," replied their grandma. "Anyway, he decided to give one of the puppies to my sister and me. The dog was a girl and I named her Dot-Dot. But sadly she died ten years later."

"That is sad," sobbed Clara.

"Then when I was ten years old I was raking leaves with my friends and I tripped over the rake and fell on the pitchfork. I had to go to the hospital to get the wound cleaned. Also I had to get a shot with a small needle. A nurse came to put a bandage on the cut, then I could go home."

"Tell us another story, Grandma," begged the children.

"Perhaps another time." Then she tucked her grandchildren in bed and wished them all a good night.

**Fennell Elementary School  
Hampton County  
Hampton District One  
Trey Greene**

**In South Carolina, people really like to...**

Have you ever visited South Carolina? If you haven't, you're missing out. People in South Carolina are very lucky because of all the beautiful nature scenery. Most people in South Carolina like to fish, hunt, and get a tan on the beautiful beach shores.

Myrtle Beach is a beautiful place to visit. This beach has warm sand and people love swimming in the warm salt water. My family and I like going to Hunting Island Beach in Beaufort, South Carolina. We visit this beach at least once in the summer. I enjoy searching for animals that are considered endangered at this beach.

Most people love to go fishing in South Carolina. Some of the major locations that are always over crowded with people fishing are located in Charleston and Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. My aunt and I love going fishing in a river in Sheldon, South Carolina. I love catching crabs and brims.

Hunters from different parts of the country come to South Carolina every year. You see men dressed in army green camouflage outfits sitting down in restaurants eating and discussing their hunting strategies. Some hunters take their family members with them hunting during deer season. There are still a few hunters who still-hunt raccoon, rabbits, and other small animals. I've never been hunting but if I got a chance I would love to shoot a big buck.

South Carolina is one of the most beautiful states in this country. People who live here sometimes don't realize the value of their surroundings. You will never get bored. There is always something to do for pleasure in this state.

Estill Elementary School  
Hampton School District 2  
Bre' Asia Johnson

In South Carolina  
Smiling faces, Beautiful Places.  
What do you think of when you  
hear that? Do you think of the  
wonderful state of South Carolina?  
If not, then here are some  
reasons why should.

In South Carolina, people  
like to ... shop, have freedom,  
and enjoy life! In South Carolina,  
there are shopping malls that you  
will not want to leave behind and  
the best parts of the mall are  
the stores, hair and nail salons!

Women in South Carolina  
enjoy having their hair and nails  
done. If you want to get your  
nails and hair done and relax in a  
warm, safe environment, the hotels  
are the place for it! Enjoy the room  
service and the restaurants with  
an in-door pool to cool off. There  
are also activities if you get  
bored. The amusement parks are  
loaded with activities that will satisfy your needs.

They will make any child welcome  
and never want to leave the school.

Now, let's talk about pets.

South Carolina has many pet  
stores and pet daycares. Inside of  
the pet stores are millions of cute  
dogs, cats, rabbits, turtles, guinea pigs  
and so much more! So to parents,  
kids, pets, of all ages, come to South  
Carolina and all of your dreams will  
come true.



**Forestbrook Elementary**  
**Horry County**  
**Julie Nierstedt**

## **I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...**

"I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals!" I exclaimed.

"Honey, it was just a dream that could never happen," Mother said convincingly. Just those first six words made the orange juice that I was drinking curdle.

"Mom, I swear..."

"We don't swear in this house!" she rudely interrupted.

"O.K. fine, I'll start over. I was just falling asleep last night, and this action hero in spandex tights blasted through our roof, into my room, and swept me up. I blinked and we were up in the sky." (My mother had a faint grin and looked like she was going to burst into laughter.) The spandex tight wearing dude told me we were in Urazonia Magnifizo. This guy was not the size of The Hulk, and he did not have the body of **SUPER MAN**. He was quite scrawny if you ask me.

I asked the dude questionably why he brought me here.

"You have a gift with the animals. One day you will be walking with the animals and talking to the animals." Then he took off to a town called Colomanzaro Charizia!

"**NOOOOOO!** Wait, I have a Latin test tomorrow!" At the moment I said Latin, about twenty five animals came out of playing dice (Don't ask me how). All I heard was Roarr, Grrr, Ssss, and Meow, oh yea, and Ruff. A slithering Anaconda came up to me and said, "Hola, Senorita." I tried to say ditto. My mouth was moving, but nothing was coming out. It was like I was on the mute button, not a sound! After I calmed down, I finally could speak and asked, "Who are you creatures and why are you here?"

"We're Gigibites!" they shrieked. "We are here to tell you that we need a waterfall in our desert. Only you can hear us so we need your help."

"I have a Latin test tomorrow, and I need to bring up my grade. I need to leave. I will grant your wish when I get home."

An odd looking creature came up to me and said, "Thank you from all of us in Urazonia." Just then I felt water splashing on my face. It was mom waking me up for my Latin test.

**Lugoff Elementary School  
Kershaw County  
Hanna Herfurth**

**"I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals..."**

I was walking with the animals when I realized that they were talking. To make sure I wasn't hearing things, I asked them a question. I said, "Why do you live here?" They replied, "Because we are forest animals."

I was so shocked and surprised that I could hardly believe my eyes. I had never heard animals speak before. I ran as fast as I could to my house. When I got there, I told my mom and dad about the animals talking. They looked at me like I had gone crazy. I know they didn't believe me.

Instead of going to school the next morning, my mom took me straight to the doctor's office. After looking me over, he took an X-ray of my head. My mom was shocked when the doctor said everything looked normal.

My parents still didn't think that I was O.K. so my mom took me to see a counselor named Mrs. Lily the following day. I was told to tell the truth, so I did. Mrs. Lily wrote things down while I explained what happened in the forest. She thought it over for a bit then told my mom I was normal. My mom didn't believe her or trust her opinion.

On the drive home, I sat wishing that someone else could hear the animals talk. When we got to the house, I went outside while my mom told my dad everything the doctors said. I walked into the forest to see the animals. I told them about my troubles and they listened carefully. They told me that everything would be fine.

I got home just in time for dinner. It was silent at the table until my dad asked me a question. He said, "Are you sure you didn't just dream about the animals talking?" I said no and left the table feeling mad.

When I got on the school bus the next day, I told my friend, Lexy about the talking animals. She was amazed and wanted me to show her sometime. I couldn't wait to take her into the forest.

After school, Lexy and I went for a scavenger hunt in my back yard. Suddenly, a squirrel came up to us and said, "Can you help me find the acorns I lost?" My wish came true! Somebody else heard an animal talk. I looked at Lexy. Her eyes and mouth were wide open. I told her to never tell her parents because they would think she was crazy.

Suddenly the squirrel said in a loud voice, "My lost acorns aren't going to find themselves." Lexy and I found all of the squirrels acorns. He said thank you and climbed up a tree. We started laughing and went into the house.

The next morning, I woke up to the smell of bacon and eggs. I jumped out of bed when I looked at the clock. It was 10:00 a.m. and I thought I was late for school. When I got downstairs, my mom told me it was Saturday. After I ate breakfast, I went outside to play. I started talking to the squirrel but he didn't say a thing. I felt confused and ran back into the house. I asked my mom if she remembered the last time I went to the doctor. She said, "Yes, it was last year when you got strep throat." At that moment I realized that it had all been a dream.

**Kershaw Elementary School  
Lancaster County  
Isaac McDaniel**

**I Was Walking with the Animals and Talking to the Animals**

One spring morning, I was walking in the woods and talking with the animals. We were talking about life. "It sure is great to be alive," I said. "I like being my own person."

The mother doe softly said to her fawn, "Son, listen to Isaac. He knows what he's talking about. He is very unique."

That's when we saw a flash of light and heard a thundering crack in the air. As we looked up, we felt gentle raindrops peppering our faces. Since it was a light, refreshing rain, the deer and I continued our conversation.

"Yeah, I don't mind trying new things and going to new places. Like walking with you today," replied Isaac.

It was a while before we heard the next boom of thunder. This one was louder.

Suddenly, the gentle rain turned into harsh rain. I ran to a tree, but the wind blew it over. Each tree I went to blew away. I suddenly looked around, and I was alone. The deer were gone.

The storm seemed to pause. I was both starving and soaking wet. On top of that, I was all alone in the woods. I was walking all over the place trying to find a way back home. Just then, I came upon a log cabin.

Remarkably, I was already dry, and I tapped on the door. Someone let me in. There were four people inside, none of whom would say anything. This was really weird! Without uttering a word, they gave me food and a map of how to get out of the woods. It was strange how they knew exactly what I needed.

After thanking them for their hospitality, I went out the door and headed for the forest. The map was hard to read.

Remarkably, I came upon the doe and fawn that I had been walking with earlier. I asked, "Can you help me make sense of this crazy thing?"

"You don't need that, Isaac. Remember you are an adventurous young man. Follow your heart," the mama doe said to me.

With her encouragement, I trusted my instincts and found my way back home. It took a while, but my house sure was welcoming.

As I walked through the door, I kicked off my shoes. My mom asked me, "Where have you been?"

I simply replied, "It's a long story."

**Gray Court –Elementary  
Laurens County  
Amelia Sargent**

**Advice For My Little Sister**

This year my little sister is starting kindergarten. She came to me saying, “I don’t know how to be in kindergarten. What do I do?” That is where I came in. I helped her get ready for her new year. I said to her, “Ok, I will help you. Here’s what you do...”

I said to her, “You always need the right school supplies, and they have to be cute and funky, like polka dots, stripes, animal pictures, and the original stickers. You’re a girl, so it definitely has to be girly with princesses, hearts, and cute pony stickers.” When I was in kindergarten, I had all these things. I told her, “Everyone will love them, but it’s not really what they think about it, it’s what you think about it.”

If my sister asked me for advice on how to deal with bullies, I would know exactly what to tell her. “Don’t even go near them. If they pick on you, just ignore them and they might leave you alone. If they don’t stop, then just don’t listen to them because they might not even know you very well. Besides, who cares what they think. If it is physical bullying, like touching or hitting, tell someone like a teacher and your mom.” I think that would be pretty good advice for my little sister.

Finally, I would give her suggestions about behavior. “You should always behave and be your best, at home and at school. You need to do all your homework, follow directions, stay on task, stay focused, and show respect for others. At school, when you behave well, you get so many privileges. You will learn more, play fun games, and get to go to recess. Also, you will never get in trouble by doing your best.”

I think it is important for kindergarteners to know this stuff because it helps them get ready for higher grades and the higher grades help them understand more. It gets them ready for adulthood too. I think the two most important things to remember are, always be yourself and practice self-control. I have learned through my experiences in school, that these suggestions will help my sister have a successful start. This is my excellent advice.

**Eastside Elementary School  
Laurens County  
Zaria Hill**

**When you are 80 years old, what will your life be like?**

When I am eighty years old, I will be old and wise. People will come to me for advice all the time. They will come to me for the big decisions, like should they buy a house or rent a house? Should they marry him or not? I will never know when to stop talking because people will come to me all the time.

When I am eighty years old, I will wear a grandma dress with lots of flowers and shoes that are flats. My hair will be snow white with streaks of elephant gray. I will wear stockings a lot. My wrinkles will weigh more than my head. I will have no teeth so I will wear dentures. I will have to drop them in the water with the blue tablet every night. In the mornings, I will have to get the Polydent and put it on my dentures and stick them in.

I will not live in a retirement home! To tell you the truth retirement homes smell like old people and sweaty socks. Also, the workers act like we have no lives just because we are old. Retirement homes don't have enough activities to do. The only activity they have is Bingo. I HATE BINGO! I will live at home with the sweet lemon scent and no Bingo.

When I turn eighty, I want to go to Vegas. I will have the time of my life there. I will be a risk taker and live life on the edge. I will be the life of the party!! I will be a part time grandma—part time spy.

The worst thing about being eighty is going to be Senior Balls. If I got invited to one I would say, "I'm twenty—Can't you tell?" Senior Balls are just plain out boring. All they do is just sit around sipping tea, and saying, "I didn't see you at our last ball."

When I'm eighty years old, I will say eighty years young. That is still young, right?

Lower Lee Elementary School  
Lee County School District 2  
Shakimbra Reames  
“Spirited and Eighty”

“Hip Hip Hooray! I am eighty years old!” I am full of spirit and I feel great. The year is 2077, and I just realized that my life is like lemonade. Some days are sour, but some days sweeter, once you put that tap of sugar in it. I am fascinated, because of the fact that I can still twist, swing, and do the Superman.

Many people influenced me to be the best I can be through my childhood as a young lady. When I graduated, I was an honor student. The high school I graduated from was Lee Central High School in 2014. The college I went to was the mighty Clemson University.

My family means a lot to me and I will never forget them in South Carolina. But my two children, their two children, and my daughter’s grandchild live in Miami, Florida.

These days, my family helped me realized that life is more than a bowl of cherries. I enjoy traveling around the world. Some places I visit are Brazil, Mexico, Italy, France, and the Bahamas. During college, I studied these places and I also received one of my Masters in history.

Whenever it is possible, I try to write because journalism is my career. It all started when I was teaching journalism and English. I taught for ten years. I always enjoyed reading and writing. I wrote several articles and stories and sent them to magazines. They were not accepted, but I kept on trying. One or two of them were accepted by *Ebony* magazine. I’ve done some free lance writing. I am not slow as a turtle and not old as dirt, but eighty is the age of this old beauty, enjoying life like a beautiful beach on a warm summer evening.

Shakimbra Reames



**Oak Grove Elementary  
Lexington One  
Stefanie Wingard**

**I was walking with the animals and talking with the animals...**

Animals can really help you, even if they can't understand you. Or can they? I think they can.

I was walking with the animals and talking with the animals when I said, "Hey, animals."

"What? What? What?" they all replied seeming very disinterested.

"You all can help me in teaching, right?" It's no secret that teachers need all the help they can get.

"Oh yeah! Sure can! Uh huh!" they said seeming more excited.

"Okay, this will be great!"

So I started thinking what can a dog do? A cat? An elephant? A lion? A tiger? A cheetah? A bird? Then I had an amazing idea!

"Bird," I said, "You can fly from table to table to make sure kids are doing their work. If they are, Alligator can hold out the stamp pad with his long nose so you, Bird, can give them a stamp. If not, then Alligator can whack them with his tail. Cheetah, you can chase down the naughty kids that try to run out when they're in trouble. Lion, you can lie down and let kids snuggle up to your soft, silky mane while they read. Please don't eat them. Dog, when kids fall and get hurt, you can lick their wounds. Cat, you can take kids' toys away and hide them if they are playing with them. All you have to do is jump on their desk and whisk them away.

That's a lot of animals, but I still have two left. To the elephant I commanded, "Elephant, you sprinkle water on kids' hands so that they get clean on the way to lunch." And finally it was Tiger's turn. I said, "Tiger, when the class is being too loud, I want you to pull your jaws back and growl. Please brush your teeth before you come to school. Please?"

Well, if animals could understand you, which I think they can, you can tell that they would be very busy with me around. Have you ever thought about what you'd have animals do if you were walking with the animals and talking with the animals?

**Claude A. Taylor Elementary School  
Lexington County  
Myles Wessinger**

**When you are 80 years old, what will your life be like?**

When I am 80 years old, I will probably be healthy and active. I predict that I will have a decent house in Chapin. Probably, I will be married and have children and grandchildren. That will mean...I'll be a grandpa!

Since I will be healthy and active, I'll be able to work around my house. It will be my job to build things, fix things, and plant a garden for my wife. I might be retired and have a lot of time to spend with my family. Maybe I'll have a dog. Hopefully, I'll have a small strip of land where I can teach my grandkids how to hunt. My dog would be a big help with that.

Every Sunday I will go to church. I probably will go to the church meetings. Possibly I'll have a car, and I will still be able to drive it to wherever I want to go. I'll be a leader in the community where I live. I will welcome new neighbors who move into the neighborhood. I'll throw parties at my house to help everyone get to know each other better.

I will enjoy helping my grandchildren with their homework. It will be very different from the homework I have. But, I know I will be able to understand it and help them understand it. Although my college days will have been over for a long time, the education I got will continue to help me learn new things. I will read all the books I want to read. Some of the books will be for just my pleasure; others will be to teach me how to do new things. Some will teach me new ideas.

Probably, I will have a good social security check come each month to help me with my bills. I will be fit for life. I will probably be on medicine then. That will help keep me healthy. When I'm 80, I'll have to watch the food I eat so I can stay active and live a life filled with fun. Also, I'll plan an exercise program for each day.

When I am 80 years old, I do not know where I'll be or what I'll do. I just know that what I do today, and everyday until that birthday, will decide what I will be able to do...when I am 80 years old.

**Batesburg-Leesville Elementary School  
Lexington #3  
Brea Rodgers**

## **I Was Walking With the Animals and Talking to the Animals**

One day I was walking with two pigeons, a dog, a hamster, and two rats (They all have issues). The female pigeon Nelly was down in the mouth because the male "Bay Lee" did not want anything to do with her. The dog did not have a home. The rats were always eating, so one of them was so stuffed with garbage that he flopped over and couldn't get back up. The hamster had a brain tumor. (Did I forget to mention that I'm a vet?) I knew exactly what to do.

I had to work on their problems one at the time, so I worked on the hamster first because that tumor could have killed him. I had to do surgery on his head. He made a full recovery.

Next, I worked on the rats because they bank on each other to live (they've been together quite sometime). It came out that he just had gas. They were both relieved that he was better.

Next, I worked on the dog because he was only five months old, and he was all alone, with no home or owners. I put flyers up everywhere, but no one claimed him. Eventually he found a place to live, right at my house. I decided to call him Spade.

Last I worked on the pigeons' relationship. Nelly wanted to spend time with Bay Lee, but he was too busy admiring himself. So I put them in a cage and told them that they'll never get out if they don't spend time together. I also mentioned that if they don't breed their species might die out. They spent a lot of time together after that conversation.

So all the animals got what they needed. They all come to my house every Saturday and Monday to spend time with their heroine. Then at twelve o'clock midnight Spade shoves everyone out the back door.

AM

Have you ever traveled to South Carolina? If not you do not know what you are missing. Today we are going to travel to two of my favorite destinations. They are Carowinds and the beautiful mountains.

Hurry up and climb aboard as we travel through all the spectacular places.

Our first stop is Carowinds. This is one of my favorite places to hang out. It is where imagination runs free, and joy flows through your lungs. If you think your amusement park is outstanding, you are not even close. We have many wonderful rides. My favorite is Thunderoad. This is my favorite because the excitement rumbles my lungs, literally! I absolutely love the water rides. I bet you are coming

"wow" as the words are spilling out my lead pencil. The best thing about Carawinds is that it is for adults too.

Our next stop is the mountains. As you may or may not know all mountains are beautiful.

However, nothing compares to South Carolina's mountains. The last time I traveled to the mountains I walked a painful trail around a mountain.

Even though it was painful it was worth every second of it. While I was walking the trail I came across a huge waterfall. I was so overwhelmed. I was excited to see a water fall so up close for the first time. I wanted to get a better look. This meant actually getting in the waters flow. I became drenched!

It was freezing cold. Never go under a water fall while it is snowing. I sure learned my lesson.

Our journey through South Carolina has come to an end.

I hope you enjoyed your  
two outstanding stops. Come and  
experience something you will  
remember for a lifetime on your  
own soon.

Lake Murray Elementary  
District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties  
Connor Blackwelder

**Your little brother (or sister) is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?**

August 23, 2008

Dear Charlie,

Congratulations! You made it to kindergarten. You're going to have a lot of fun, but here's some advice to make your day easier.

Number one, avoid school lunches. Some people in my class have found weird things in the lunches. Make good friends that you trust. Make sure you get on your teacher's good side by being as cute as you can. You don't want to be on your teacher's bad side. You want to participate; you do a lot of fun stuff like painting. Don't be a tattler. Learn to read, but don't let it take over your life.

Now, read this last paragraph carefully, these next few tips are big ones. Use naptime for as long as you can, and appreciate it. You will definitely want it when you're older and get no breaks from work. When you are making Christmas ornaments in arts and crafts, make sure you get a good picture, it will hang on the tree forever! One year I got a bad picture and it still haunts me when Christmas comes. When mom or dad asks how your day was, no matter what happened just say, "good." But if you say, "bad," you'll have to talk to them for about half an hour about what went wrong, and who did this to you, and did anyone try to help you. I think we both know which one to pick! This last one is probably the biggest one of all, just have **FUN!**

Please consider my suggestions.

Sincerely,

*Connor*

Marion Intermediate School  
Marion County  
Kerri Vyge

**"I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals..."**

"And the new president for the U.S.A. is...Bunny Rabbit!" "Yes." I said. The reporter on Big Bug News had just announced the new president. "Honey!" called my mom. "It's time for school, hurry up!" "Come on Franklin it's time to go to school." I said.

We grabbed our backpacks and ran out of the door. We stopped at the bus stop and there I saw my friend Emily Elephant. "Hi Honey." "Hello Emily." "Did you hear the big news?" "Yes I'm so happy Bunny Rabbit won the election." "Me too." whispered Franklin. Then the big purple bus came and we got on. "Howdy." said the bus driver Henry Horse.

As I walked down the aisle I saw almost all my friends: Alex frog, Austin alligator, Courtland cat, and Brandy bear. I went and sat next to Brandy. When we got to school everyone was running in different directions. I finally got to my class room at 7:38. Mr. Hess was at his desk grading math homework from last week.

After morning work Mr. Hess said he had a surprise for us. "Pop Quiz!" "Uhhhh!" said the class. "It was not me who gave you the quiz, it was the quiz fairy. She is my neighbor. Don't worry you'll all make 100%. We just learned this last Friday." "Rrringg!" went the telephone. Mr. Hess picked it up. "Hello. Why? Well, o.k. Children, the quiz fairy just called and told me to give you the test tomorrow." "Yeahhhh!" we all screamed. "O.k. settle down, it's time for science."

After school I went home and told my mom about the test. "Well you better study hard. By the way, Emily called and wants to see if you can go skating with her tonight!" "I'd love to. Can I?" "Sure you can."

I went upstairs to my room and got my new skates out. "Ring! Ring!" "Hello. Oh, hi Emily, I can't wait to go skating tonight." "So are you going to wear your new skates?" "Yeah." I said. "Are you?" "Of course. Well, I'll see you tonight. Bye."

As I hung up the phone, my little sister Charlotte called me to go play with her. "O.k., but for only five minutes." I was playing with Charlotte for what seemed like five minutes, but was actually two hours. "Honey!" called my mother. "Emily is here." "I'm coming!" I screamed. "Oh, no! I did not study, I guess I can study when I get home." "Honey, come on!"



I quickly grabbed my skates and went downstairs. "Hi, Honey. Ready to go skating?" said Emily. "Yes, let's go!" When we got to the skating rink, we caught sight of Alex. "Hello!" said Alex. "Hi, Alex." said Emily and I.

"Get your skates on and come on. They have been playing some really good songs tonight." said Alex. "I hope they play 'Video Killed the Radio Star' that's my sister's favorite song." I said.

After a long night of skating, eating pizza and drinking soda, we finally got to my house at ...11:00!!! Thanks Emily I had a great time, see you tomorrow." "See you!" I ran inside the house and as soon as I walked in the door my mom welcomed me and told me to have a shower and go to bed. As I walked up to the shower I remembered my math test.

"I guess I can just study in bed. When I got to bed I fell right asleep forgetting about my math test. "Ding! Ding! Ding! Ding!" I pressed the button on my alarm clock. "Honey breakfast time. Hurry up or you'll be late." called my mom. I quickly got dressed and went down stairs.

When I got to my classroom everyone was talking. "What's the big news?" I asked. "Don't you remember, we have a math test today." "What! I totally forgot!" I screamed as Mr. Hess walked in the room.

"O.k. everyone time for the test." I started to get sweaty as he passed out the test. Only twelve questions. I said to myself. Maybe it will be o.k. Then I looked down at the questions. Never mind.

Rrring! As the bell rang everyone gave their test to Mr. Hess. "Bye everyone have fun in Miss Faerber's class." said Mr. Hess. "Finally the test is over." I whispered to Courtland.

The next day I got my test back and "O my Goodness! I made an ..." "Rrring" "Kerri time for school, hurry up and get down here." We got in the car and headed for school. "Mom I had the funniest dream. I was a dog and all my friends were animals. And I made an F on my math test. "Slow down Honey." "And my name was Honey." "Don't worry dear you'll do fine on your test today." "I hope I have another dream where I'm walking and talking with animals." "I'm sure you will, now have a good day at school. "Bye!" "Bye mom!"

McCormick Elementary School  
Marion County

Damini T. Patel

Your little brother or sister is starting kindergarten next year.  
What advice would you give him or her about attending school?

“Advice to my Brother”

Do you have a brother or sister that will be attending kindergarten soon? Well, I certainly have one. Next year my little brother is going to start kindergarten. The best advice I would give him about how important it is to attend school is to make sure he enjoys kindergarten. He also needs to make good friends and to follow all directions.

I would give my little brother the advice to enjoy kindergarten, because when you get older it is going to be more difficult. For instance, when you are in higher grades, the work becomes much harder. You will have to study more than you did in kindergarten.

The next piece of advice I would give my little brother about attending kindergarten is to have a positive attitude towards his teachers. If he messes up in kindergarten, he would be starting off on the wrong foot. That bad attitude could follow him throughout his entire school life.

The third piece of advice I would give my little brother about attending kindergarten would be to always be a good friend. If he becomes sad or lonely, a good friend could always cheer him up no matter what happens.

Last but not least, I would also tell my little brother to follow the teacher's directions when they are instructed to him. For example, if my brother does not follow instructions, he may get the wrong answers for a given test. In fact if he does not follow directions, he will surely have a hard time in school.

Therefore, I have listed some good examples of advice. I have given my little brother this advice so he will understand the importance of attending kindergarten. I hope my advice will be a great help to him as he enters school for the very first time.

Britton's Neck Elementary School  
Marion County  
Karastin Hughes

**Your little brother (or sister) is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?**

"School! School! My little brother yelled as he ran across the house.

"Sit down," I shouted from my room. I was trying to do my homework, and he was getting me mad with all the noise. "Why are you running around anyway?"

"Mama said I'm going to school next ear." "Next ear?" I thought. "Do you mean next year?" I asked. "Yeah!" he shouted. "What's so great about school," I thought. I am in a classroom all day. I listen to a boring teacher. I am just really tired and ready to go home. Getting into trouble for.....OH NO! Getting into trouble!

"Let me give you some advice," I said. "Come here and sit down".

He came and sat on my bed. Still jumpy, I told him to be still.

"What's admice?" he asked. Knowing he was only 3 years old, I kindly replied, "Advice, not admice. It means that I tell you something to help you." "One thing I'm going to tell you is to be a good boy. Don't go around getting into trouble with Jamal." "I won't," he answered. All I could do was smile. He looked so cute when he talked. "Another thing, be smart. If someone is bothering you, tell your teacher, a grown up that's near by, or just move away from he or she."

"What if they're older than me," he asked.

"Tell your big sister!" I answered. "I'll tell mama and she'll talk to your teacher. We'll work something out!"

"OKAY!" he yelled.

"I've got two more things for you to do when you start school."

"What?" he replied.

"The first one is to participate."

"What does par....paricinate mean?" he asked as he drifted off into outer space.

"Participate means that when the class is doing something, you do it too. Now that doesn't mean if the class is doing something bad, it's okay for you to do it too. Then you'd have to go to Ms. Slagle, the principal. It means that if the teacher tells you to do something, you should participate by doing as she said which I guess kind of means do your work!"

"What's last?" he asked. He'd looked interested and had gotten quiet.

"Just have fun!" I answered. "Be happy and be a fun friend. You'll have fun friends, trust me. You'll love school for now," I mumbled.

"Donovan!" my mother called. He ran out of the room. "That little boy," I said. "What am I gonna do with him." But oh, he'll love school I thought..... that is until he gets to ...FIFTH GRADE!

Patrick Walters  
McColl Middle School  
District Winner for Marlboro County  
Grade 5

### The Magical Rainforest

One day, June 6<sup>th</sup>, on my summer break, I went to South America to go watch the animals and their habitats. It was a very amazing experience.

The next day I went on a safari. I was watching the animals when suddenly a lion carried me off. While he was carrying me to his pride, I hit my head on a tree and got a concussion. When I awoke, I heard a voice saying, "He is waking up." I wiped my face slowly and looked up. I was surrounded by colossal lions! I looked at my hands. They were paws. I looked at my reflection in the water, and I was a lion!

The head lion asked me, "What is your name?"

I couldn't speak so I said, "Ahh!"

When he asked me where I was from, I said, "Help me!"

Then he said, "Greetings, Ahh from Help Me."

I finally got my voice back and said to them, "No, my name is Patrick, and I am from North Carolina."

Then the leader said, "Well, then, hello to you, Patrick, from the glorious place of North Carolina."

In a few more days, I started to eat plants and berries, and the lions did, too. I talked to the lions and they found out it was better than causing them pain and suffering. Also, they made new friends. I found out all the lions' names so we could talk and have a closer relationship. We had lots of fun and conversations together.

My best friends were Leon the Lion, Chad the Cheetah, Marv the Monkey, and Larry the Llama. Every day we went to the lake and “messed with” old Mr. Charlie Crocodile. I loved being one with nature.

About three months later, there arrived a bus. Somehow my tail curled around the trailer hitch. When the bus arrived at the station, I was human again. I was sad because I realized I wouldn’t see my friends in the rainforest ever again.

When I got back home, my family was very worried. When I told them about my adventure, they laughed and told me to go to bed. So I went to bed, but I will never forget the magical rainforest!

**McCormick County School District  
McCormick Elementary School  
Cyndadra C. Arnette**

**Being Old is Awesome**

I am eleven years old. When I am eighty years old I wonder what will happen. Will I have grandchildren, or will I live alone? Will I be a foxy old lady, or a tired one? I wish that I could find out. Will I live in a big mansion, or a little old shack? Will I be wealthy, or live in poverty? I wish that I had a time machine to take me to the future. Then I could see with my own eyes what I would be doing.

That night, I went to bed and I had a dream. I dreamt about being eighty years old. I was an old lady with curls in my hair. I wore glasses too. I always wore a dress or a skirt suit. I had one child, two grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. I also had a husband who was very ill. I lived in a big mansion. The mansion was five stories high. I was rich. I dreamt that someone had invented flying cars and I had a black stretch limousine. I had a lot of friends too. You will never believe what my job had been. I was a retired OB-GYN. I even found out that I graduated number one in my class. Only two things were the same. I still lived in South Carolina and my Mom was still living. She was one hundred and eight years old.

I dreamt that my husband got better. He only had a very bad cold. Then, suddenly, I woke up. I discovered that it was all just a dream. Although it had only been a dream, I felt like it was real. I realized that even though it had only been a dream, I could make it a reality.

**Whitmire Community School**  
Newberry County  
**Bethany Cromer**

**“In South Carolina, people really like to...”**

Smiling faces, beautiful places, is the slogan of the state of South Carolina. It really does describe this amazing state. In South Carolina, people really like to go different places and have fun. There are a lot of beautiful places to go, places to relax, and some places that offer fun and excitement. The palmetto state also has the most delicious food in the world! Whether you are visiting the Blue Ridge Mountains, or visiting the coast, you'll find some scrumptious food along the way.

If you go to relax at Myrtle Beach, you can get into the ocean and build sand castles. If you ladies need to get a really good sun tan, Myrtle Beach is the best place to go! I just love the way it feels when you squeeze your toes in the sand, and in the evening, the beach is the place to have a relaxing walk.

Now, I know some of you people love to see pictures of the mountains. I am telling you, the Blue Ridge Mountains offer the best scene. Since you know now that South Carolina has the best mountains, you don't have to look at pictures. You can come see them in person! I just love the diversity of the shapes and colors of the mountains. Sometimes if you're lucky, it will start SNOWING! You should come see how gorgeous the mountains appear with the glistening snow sparkling on top.

I don't want you to have some LAME food, so if you come to South Carolina the olfactory will make your mouth water like a dog that just spotted a bone! In South Carolina, we have a lot variety in food like: Italian, Mexican, Greek, and of course American.

Another wonderful thing about South Carolina is the pride of our Gamecocks. If you ever visit the state, be sure to catch a game. You will have a day of pure excitement ...not to mention more tasty food!

South Carolina puts beautiful pictures in my head, and I'm certain if you were to visit, you would feel the same. I know you love the beautiful photos of South Carolina, but if you come to the palmetto state you'll get to see how beautiful it really is. Whether you go visit the beach, the mountains, or come to see our mighty Gamecocks, I assure you South Carolina is the place to go! Don't forget to pick up some of our scrumptious food along the way!

**James M Brown Elementary School**  
**Oconee County**  
**Jill Achenberg**

**I was Walking with the Animals and Talking with the Animals...**

I was walking with the animals and talking with the animals . . .

WAIT... let me start from the beginning. Today when I woke up, or at least when my dog woke me up he said, "Wake up sleepy head! Rise and shine! It is a brand new day. The birds are singing, the flowers are blooming and the kids are heading off to school. So get yourself in gear!"

Imagine how I felt. My dog just spoke to me in a voice that sounded "doggish" with a touch of British accent. Flabbergasted fits how I felt, coupled with the fact I almost fell over backward off my bed.

"What did you say, Ruffy?" I gasped.

"You heard me, get ready for school. Excuse me, I need to go outside."

I threw my clothes on and leaped down the stairs, hoping to catch Ruffy outside. My mind was overflowing with questions.

"Whoa, slow down! What is the rush?" Mom asked.

"Ruffy just talked to me and told me to get ready for school and..." I paused, breathless. "I do not have time to explain it; is Ruffy still outside?"

Mom nodded so I dashed outside, took the corner around the house and I came face to muzzle with Ruffy.

"Ruffy, how come I can understand you?"

"Maybe it is because you decided to listen," barked Ruffy.

"Please Ruffy, please tell me!"

Before I could finish Ruffy spun on his paws and was gone. I looked at my watch. It was 7:45! I missed my bus; I was going to be late for school! I kissed Mom goodbye and ran off to school. When I got into the main hall the tardy bell rang. I snuck into homeroom while the teacher's back was facing the door. Moving toward my desk, Ms. Burfiend said, "Sit down Jill, and take your test."

"How did you know I was there?" I asked surprised.

"A little fly told me."

"So the animals are talking to you too?"

The class burst out laughing. "It is just an expression," Ms. Burfiend chuckled.

Later, while walking home a no good dog started chasing after me. It leaped up, drooling and snarling. "Jill! Wake up! Ruffy is right here. Quit pushing him away, he is only trying to kiss you!" I opened my eyes and saw Ruffy and Mom. I was walking, and talking with an animal...in my dreams!



**Orangeburg County Consolidated School District Three**  
**St. James-Gaillard Elementary School**  
**Ashley Gibbs-Sanders**

When you are 80 years old, what will your life be like?

When I am 80 years old, I am going to do numerous things. Sure, I will be old, but that does not disqualify me or anyone else from the race. First, I would make my life a festival. How? Well, I would buy myself a mansion. I would hire maids and professional cooks. Oh! It would be marvelous! I'll have glorious hot tubs, Jacuzzis, and many relaxation items. An 80 year old has to relax you know!

Next, my life will be fun because I will have lots of festivities, parties and gatherings. People will come to enjoy my many wonderful attractions. On certain days, I will take my guests out to dinner at very expensive restaurants.

In addition, when I am 80 years old, I will do extensive traveling. I will travel to Paris, Rome, Germany, and Africa. I will be rich in knowledge of the different countries. It will be a tremendous experience to learn about the different cultures of these countries.

I also will be wealthy, but kind. I will donate money to children's programs, charities, and other organizations that need assistance. I will feel good knowing that I am giving back to the community.

Finally, I will inspire others to do good, give back to the community, and travel to learn about different places. I will inspire the old as well as the young. I will be a dependable, honorable elderly citizen who for years will cherish my community. I will always be strong and tell the community's history to my children and grandchildren so that they can carry on the tradition with their children and others.

In conclusion, when I am 80 years old, my life will be a fun fair. I will live in a mansion. Parties and festivities will be a couple of my favorite activities. I will travel

extensively to learn more about other cultures, and I will be one of the most helpful community elderly citizens. I will donate time and money to children's program and so much more. I will do my best to make my community a strong hold. I will make my community, my family, and myself very proud!

**Edisto Elementary School**  
**Orangeburg County**  
**Alyssa Shire**

**“I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...”**

I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals about if they had a home, food, family or friends. One thing I think we were all worried about was if they were going to live. They knew that they didn't have a home since their homes were cut down for a mall. They lost a lot of friends and family. They didn't have food. They really weren't sure if they were going to live.

While we were walking, we were talking about their homes. The question was: Did they have a home? We already knew the answer. It was no. It was sad that they cut down animal's homes for another mall. The trees were cut now into little pieces of wood. The animals couldn't live in little pieces of wood! What would they do? Move?

The second thing I was thinking about was if they had enough food. What were they supposed to do? Get stuff off the road? They probably wouldn't because the food could have a serious disease. They had to fight for survival. They thought that they would live long, but they were wrong.

The third thing we talked about was if they had family or friends. They knew that, too. They knew that they didn't have a lot of family or friends. Who were they supposed to get help from? I guess they had to rely on what they had.

We were talking about if they were gonna live. They had to guess that they were gonna die. They didn't have a lot of family or friends to rely on. They didn't have food. They also didn't have shelter. So, technically, they were gonna die.

This all comes together to show what people are doing to our environment. If we keep cutting down trees, no animals or people will be around. That will happen because plants give people and animals oxygen. You wouldn't like it if somebody came and cut your house down. That's why we need to stop. I guess I will see what happens!?

## **The Extraordinary Life of an Eighty-Year Old**

Don't be alarmed; I'm just reflecting on what my life will be like when I am eighty-years old. Just the mere thought of being a retired neurologist, owning my own hospital, and living in Hawaii sends tingling chills down my spine. Now, let's reminisce on what my extraordinary life has been like these past eighty years.

As a busy toddler, I always excelled in any task given to me. In elementary school, I participated in the Magnet Program for gifted students. In middle school, I was engaged in a variety of sports and activities. I graduated as valedictorian from high school. After high school, I attended Harvard University and majored in Medicine, there, I was exposed to neurosurgery. From that point on, I was destined to be a neurologist.

Ten years into my work, I married Daniel Washington, the love of my life. We had three children. Leaving my children and returning to work was very hard for me to do.

I then received the opportunity to travel abroad to take part in a procedure that would separate a set of twins conjoined at the head. Astonishingly, the surgery was a great success. I was ranked fifth among my colleagues, that was the greatest honor I had ever received. Since then, I have performed numerous successful surgeries on conjoined twins, but I've had a few to fail. Conjoined twin surgeries take an enormous amount of time and a steady hand.

My ultimate goal was to own my own hospital and work with families who could not afford such an expensive procedure. I began to search for sponsors from around the world. After five years of seeking funds through proposals, attending meetings, and contacting hospitals and individuals in the medical field, my plan was finally funded. I begin construction in Ohio and later

branched off to the beautiful island of Hawaii. Both hospitals have been operational for thirty years.

My family and I built an elegant home in Honolulu. I currently have ten grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. My son and his family live in Hawaii, and my other two children live in Ohio. At the age of eighty, I can truly say that I have led a full and productive life. My hospitals are ranked third and seventh in the nation; thanks to my staff who performs neurosurgery on hundreds of patients from across the globe. My life at eighty is remarkable and noteworthy. If you are ever in the area, please look me up. I am still in the business of helping people and saving lives, which has been my life's purpose.

# Kindergarten

- Ambler Elementary School  
- Pickens County  
- Brye Moss

My little brother, Ben, is starting kindergarten next year... I'll have to admit, he's a little upset. I hope when I sit down to talk with him, my big-sisterly advice will be helpful to him.

I walked over, sat down on the sofa next to my brother, and began to talk. "Ben, you don't have to worry about kinder-," I was interrupted by the sound of whimpering. I looked in Ben's eyes, and was surprised to find them overflowing with tears. "Oh Ben...", I began. "Kindergarten is really a lot of fun. You'll meet new friends, and you'll get to play and learn." "B-but," he stuttered, trying to overcome his sobs, "what if nobody likes me, and what if they won't play with me? Uhhh..." He became hysterical again. "If you treat the other children with respect, they won't have a reason to dislike you. There will be lots of fun toys to play with, like blocks and toy

soldiers. Out in the school yard, you'll be able to ride on tricycles. You'll learn a lot, too," I explained. He continued to release tears of depression, anxiety, and fear.

I waited, then when his sobs finally subsided, I started on another subject; the rules of kindergarten. "Respect," I began, "is when you care for others and are considerate to them. If they want to play, you should let them. In fact, that's an excellent way to make new friends." "But what if the other kids are mean to me?" he whined. "If they are, don't be mean back. Just walk off, pretend you can't hear them, and calmly tell a teacher. During classtime, the teacher will give you worksheets and papers to color, so always do your best. But if you don't know something, or you need help, tell a teacher. Never, ever copy off other people's papers."

I tried to calm him, heaved a great sigh, and started on my final topic. "There will be work in school, like learning the alphabet, adding, subtracting, and discovering your shapes. You'll need these skills to move on to first grade, so you must always pay attention. If you happen to come across a question you don't know, like I said, ask a teacher, or you could use all of your knowledge to figure it out. When you get an assignment, don't slack off and be lazy. Do your best. In the end, it will be worth it, and you'll never want to leave kindergarten."

When I had finished speaking, I began to hum to Ben, trying to get him to stop crying. I got up when he was quiet, looked at him, and could tell he felt much better. I felt like the most proud sister in the history of mankind.



**Burnside Elementary School  
Richland County  
Loma Jones**

**“I Was Walking With The Animals And Talking To The Animals...”**

I was walking down town when all of a sudden, I looked back and a group of animals were following me. Suddenly they were walking beside me. They seemed to be angry. Then I found out what the problem was. They don't like the way people are polluting their environment. People are throwing trash in the lakes and ponds, littering the highways and carelessly burning down the trees in the forest. The animals asked for my help in cleaning up the environment. I agreed to do everything I could to help.

The next day, I made and put up signs that said, **“BE RESPECTFUL TO THE ANIMALS BY NOT POLLUTING THE ENVIRONMENT.”** I asked family and friends for money so I could use it to buy supplies for cleaning up the environment. I bought trash bags, rakes, and shovels. Then I bought food and seeds for the animals to eat. Many animals needed food because their natural habitats had been destroyed.

Then I got family, friends, and even strangers together to help me clean up the animals' environment. We cleaned the lakes and ponds by getting all the trash out of them. We walked along the sides of roads and picked up litter. We also raked parks and shoveled up all debris and cleared away junk that people had discarded. We wanted the parks to look nice for animals and people to enjoy.

We put up signs that said **“Be careful while camping.”** We reminded people to put out camp fires and cleanup their camping area before they left. Many people are careless about putting out fires and cause needless fires in our parks and camp grounds. The signs were to remind people to enjoy the environment but to leave it safe for the animals.

My friends and I did a great job cleaning up the environment. Then, the animals came and walked and talked with me again. Guess what! They were not angry anymore. They were smiling! They wanted to thank me and seemed happy for all my hard work in getting the environment cleaned up. Now they were excited because they could now enjoy a clean, safe, and unpolluted environment.

It was fun walking and talking with the animals. The animals never came to walk or talk with me again. But I am sure they would probably come again if people forget to keep the environment safe for them. I was glad I was able to help them live in a clean environment.

**Sandlapper Elementary School  
Richland School District Two  
Carly Lawyer**

**“I was walking and talking to the animals...”**

**I was at Riverbanks Zoo in the summer of May 2007. Glancing up at the sky, I saw whipped cream clouds floating through the air in an ocean of blue above my head. As I turned and walked in the gates, a cool breeze ran and landed in my arms making me feel as if I was a candle in a hurricane. Once I saw the bird house, I immediately flew to the tiger’s cage. Word on the street was the zoo got a new male. When I reached my destination, there wasn’t a single soul in sight! I was terribly puzzled. Normally the tigers were the highlight of the day!**

**When I placed my hands on the rusty bars, I saw him. His beautiful, luminous, tangerine coat shone in the bright sunshine. His face resembled a King’s, so grand and unreadable. His eyes had a flaxen glare as they pulled me in to observe who I was like a page in a book. The magnificent beast stalked closer and closer to me; so close he almost fell into the channel between us. To my great surprise, he gracefully landed in the bottom of the twenty foot trench on his great padded feet.**

**A bubble erupted in me, and a strange sensational feeling grew. Now we were face to face with his whiskers tickling my face. “Who are you?” “A friend,” he answered, “A tiger in a cage. My name is Vigorous Riddle.” He looked at me with those big honeybee yellow eyes and I felt fur; lots of fur. Something wet licked my forehead, and I knew no more. I was walking and talking to the animals on a not so normal day.**

**Hollywood Elementary School  
Saluda County Schools  
Madison Price**

## **When You Are 80 Years Old, What Will Your Life Be Like?**

Wow! Time flies when you enjoy your life. As I lay in my hospital bed, 80 and lonely, I start to cry. I am not crying because I only have a few hours to live, but because I recall the journey that brought me to where I am now. These are not sad tears, but joyful tears, because I have something to look forward to. I know that my travels to this point have been faithful and full of memories.

First of all, I think back to when I was younger. I was always thought of as the gentle, thoughtful, considerate person. I was often picked on by the popular, prissy girls because I didn't have the latest Marilyn Monroe or Elvis Pressley records or stylish clothes. Deep down I had a talent about to be lit like dynamite. I always wanted to dance like the other girls, but my real flair, the thing that made me show out, was when you put a piano in front of me. Jealousy was evident among the other girls when that piece of dynamite was lit by my family's support and love. I was not a bit ashamed of the talent God had blessed me with. Yet, there was always someone trying to hold me back, but not for long.

Later on, as I matured, I found that I had inherited heart trouble. Just my luck. It had skipped a generation. God helped me through it. I was sent to a special center for a transplant. My new heart was given to me by a younger child. Heart transplants are a serious operation. If that child hadn't have died, I would not have a heart or be alive today. I later found the family undercover because we are not supposed to have contact with them after surgery. They gave me a wonderful gift and I had to tell them so.

As my life continued, new inventions came along. Taking the place of the horse and buggy were automobiles. I soon learned to drive. Now those old Model T's are replaced by SUV's and foreign sports cars. Also, things are a lot louder now with stereos and ipods. The quiet nights we used to spend around the fire listening to the radio shows, reading, or telling stories to each other have been replaced by cell phones and video games.

Last but not least, the most important thing about my life is where I am now. My husband died young, in his late 30's, from an aneurysm. I became a young widow and learned to move on in order to raise our children. My rewards and blessings are many when my grandchildren come to visit with me and we play games I played as a child, like "Candy Land" and "Clue."

It has been a wonderful life. I am surrounded by my loveable family and friends. I will never forget the wonderful people and things that have touched my life. Hopefully, through my music, I have touched theirs, also.

**New Prospect Elementary School  
Spartanburg County One  
Katie Bridgeman**

**In South Carolina, People Like to...**

Take a boat ride across the daring oceans our tour an old, historical site...Do all this and more in our amazing state of South Carolina! South Carolina has the most beautiful mountains and the longest stretching fields of grain. Here, we're having a dream everyday of joy, fun, and adventure.

Are you an inside person? Well, for you we have our museums, hands on investigation areas, and shopping. Come to Columbia, South Carolina, where you'll meet fun and adventure in our wonderful state's capital. Here, many things are always going on like fairs, parades, celebrations, and parties.

Go on down and meet eyes with the rushing waves of our coast. Come and lay yourself out on a towel and feel the wind rustle through your hair as seabirds loom over you and the sand sits still beneath you. Welcome to the beaches of Edisto, Kiawah, Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head, Folly Beach, and many others. There are millions of vacationers that pick, with pride, their key spot, for it should be yours too!

Ah, and you just must take a look at Charleston. This is a historic site that in fact, long ago, was the main import-export station for South Carolina. Charleston even holds the first shot of the Civil War! Here, we have battlegrounds that you will remember for the rest of your life! I, for one, have seen Fort Sumter and even have an actual bullet from the Civil War!

Hike up the rugged mountains and Sandhills to find another wonder: The Blue Ridge Mountains! These mighty hills and peaks tower over ground level and run through the clouds. Take a hike across a steep ridge or ride an electric lift over the cliffs. Many things lay in your presence when you enter South Carolina! But if you just must stay modern, just follow the roads to the Piedmont. Here, you'll find MORE shopping and friendly people of all ages. You'll feel at home. Many people love South Carolina, and you will too!

**Boiling Springs Intermediate School  
Spartanburg County  
Vivian Tran**

**“In South Carolina, people really like to...”**

Have you ever been to South Carolina? Hiking on the edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains? Maybe you just enjoy sitting on the couch with friends, watching college football, screaming for your team. Or how about strolling down the lanes of the Charleston Museum looking at the displays of history? In South Carolina, people love doing these things.

The Blue Ridge Mountains are a delightful sight. From a great distance, you can still see the midnight blue shade of the beautiful mountains. The clouds at sunset have a pinkish, pale white color. Since it is so tall, you can see a massive view from the top. It is glamorous.

Another thing South Carolinians like to do is watch college football. Saturday night is when we go bonkers. The whole stadium roars with supporting words. The cheerleaders begin waving their pom-poms as the game starts, “Go team go!” they yell. We also have the Gamecock and Clemson football teams. Every year they have a face off. Everyone does not go to the stadium, some cuddle on the couch together sighing when they miss, and screaming when they score a touchdown. Our neighbors go insane. I bet you could hear them miles away.

The Charleston Museum is faded in color, for it has been here for hundreds of years. There are ginormous bones put together. They are colored and positioned in a way that looks real. They combine wax to make sculptures of people long ago. It appears as if I could simply talk to them, but they are only waxed figures. A vigilant hawk hangs overhead in a transparent case. They hang and poise animals in different positions, so it looks alive.

South Carolina has the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains, the breath taking history in the Charleston Museum, and the amazing football tournaments on Saturday nights. In South Carolina, people enjoy these wonderful activities. They would agree that South Carolina is splendid indeed.

**Clifdale Elementary School**  
**Spartanburg School District 3**  
**Christopher E. Carter**

**Your little brother (or sister) is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?**

Little brother, you have to listen to some advice because you start kindergarten tomorrow. You will probably be scared because you won't know anyone and won't have friends there. You might be worried that someone will make fun of you. Here are some tips that you will need to help you to be less scared and worried.

First, you can't talk without permission or talk back to the teacher. Try not to let anyone distract you so you can learn as much as you can. Don't make funny noises to aggravate the teacher and don't get up without permission. Never yell out answers in the classroom either, you have to raise your hand.

Next, don't get into a lot of trouble, or you won't get recess. Missing it is not fun at all. You can't be hitting other people or getting into fights. If you do, you will go to the principal's office.

Make lots of friends, but don't make friends with the wrong people. If someone makes fun of you, don't listen to them, because they just feel badly about themselves. Don't let others make you feel like you don't fit in. You probably fit in better than they do. If there's a club and they won't let you join, start your own club and let lots of people join.

Remember to try to be the best in your class. You might be worried that you won't be as good as the others at listening or learning. They will want to be like you if you listen better and learn the most. Don't try to act like someone else, just be yourself. In class, when you can't figure out answers, tell the teacher, and she will help you.

At lunch, you can't throw food, spitballs, or play in your food. Eat your lunch, and then you can play at recess. Play with your friends and don't tackle when you play football, play two-hand tag instead.

Last, don't let anybody take advantage of you. That just makes them happy. When someone is trying to fight with you, tell the teacher. If they won't let you go, you might have to fight back. If you've told, you won't get in much trouble. Whenever you do something bad, and the teacher asks you if you did it, you have to be honest. When you have a problem with somebody, go to the guidance counselor for advice.

Little brother, I hope you will follow my advice when you go to school tomorrow. Have a great first day and make lots of friends. I hope my advice will work, and that you will get a great education.

**Woodruff Elementary School  
Spartanburg County  
Eli Wireman**

**“I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...”**

**Have you ever talked or walked with animals? No! I have. It was the coolest thing ever.**

**I was at the zoo when something said, “Hey kid, come here,” that something was a big lion.**

**I was shocked. I started walking towards it. I didn’t know what else to do.**

**When I got there the lion said, “You see that chew toy that dog has?”**

**“Y, ye, yes,” I stuttered.**

**“Well go get it, before I get you!” the lion shouted. I tried to walk to it as calmly as ever.**

**When I got to the dog I asked it, “Can I have that chew toy?” as sweetly as I could say it.**

**“You want this? Well, you can’t have it,” he snapped.**

**“He won’t give it too me,” I shouted to the lion.**

**“Tell him to give it up or else,” he roared.**

**“You heard him,” I told the dog.**

**“I’m going to go right over there and tell him to kiss it goodbye,” the dog growled.**

**“He’s coming,” I shouted to the lion.**

**“I’m going to eat you alive, dog,” the lion screamed.**

**The lion jumped right out of his cage. He snatched the chew toy and jumped right back into his cage.**

**“Hey, that’s not fair,” a little girl cried.**

**“Be quiet,” I said to the little girl.**

**Then suddenly I could hear millions of voices. They weren’t people either. I looked at a snake.**

**“Ssstop looking at me,” it hissed.**

**The monkeys had the weirdest accent. They were FRENCH!!**

**“Ha, Ha madam muzel,” they laughed. They were weird, and the geckos I don’t even want to go there.**

**All of a sudden, I was in the jungle with all the animals I heard at the zoo. We started walking and talking with each other.**



**"Ha, I finally have that chew toy," the lion called out.**

**"Tea misure?" the monkeys hollered at me.**

**"No," I answered.**

**"Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha," the hyenas laughed. I fell asleep in the middle of all of it just in the wink of an eye. When I woke up I was in my bedroom.**

**"It was only a dream," I gasped. I went downstairs.**

**"Hey kid what do you want for breakfast?" the dog asked. I thought I was going to die right there.**

**"Hey dog, get him some steak," the lion roared.**

**"No, no, no, he needs French toast," one of the monkeys said.**

**"Nothing, I want nothing!" I shouted.**

**"Too late," the dog said while setting a nice pile of pancakes in front of me.**

**"Why are you talking to me?" I screamed.**

**"I don't know why," the dog answered.**

**"You can understand us, I guess," the lion butted in.**

**"I think it is a dream," I called back. "I think it's a dream," I told them.**

**"Wake up, wake up its time for school sweetheart," my mom told me in her non-animal voice.**

**Yesss! I don't have to talk to animals anymore I thought.**

**"Hey kid," I heard something yell. I looked out my window. There was no one. Then I looked back at my bed. There they were the dog, the lion and the French monkeys.**

**"I was dreaming about my stuffed animals," I mumbled to myself.**

**"Bye!" the animals yelled.**

**Stuffed animals talking??? AHHHHHHH!!!**

**Beech Springs Intermediate School  
Spartanburg County  
Marah Elder**

**“I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...”**

I was lost in the jungle. Suddenly I heard strange noises. They were calling my name. I was looking for my journal to blog what was happening. Apparently who or whatever was saying my name had my journal.

All of a sudden a monkey came out from behind a tree with my journal. Then we heard hunters talking. I told the monkey to get in my backpack. The monkey said, “What if you are a hunter?”

“Trust me. I’m not,” I whispered.

After we were sure the hunters were gone we came out from hiding. But out of the water came a family of crocodiles. The monkey hopped out of my backpack and said, “See you later.”

I tried to follow the monkey because the family of crocodiles was chasing me. I got in a tree with the monkey and the crocodiles went back into the water.

When the crocodiles left, we got out of the tree. We started walking but we felt the ground shake a little bit. Then we saw in the distance it was elephants. We ran as fast as we could. The elephants left so we kept walking.

We started walking. Then the monkey threw my journal at a bee hive. We heard buzzing so we stayed alert.

“Now look at what you did,” I said. “Sorry,” he replied.

The bees came out so we ran. We lost them when we jumped in the water.

We got on a boat and sailed away. We found a beautiful island that had food, stuff to build houses. and sparkling water. We loved it. We made houses. The best part is the grass was so soft we made beds out of it.

We fell asleep in our soft grass beds. When we woke up there was a fairy standing right outside of the house we built. She said, “Don’t be frightened I will protect the island with my magic.”

We were frightened, but ever since then nothing bad has ever happened to us at that island.

We have had great luck on this island. We have struck a gold mine. We always thank that wonderful fairy for everything she has done.

**Fairforest Elementary School  
Spartanburg County  
Ashley Robinson**

**I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals . . .**

I was walking to my house when my cat shot out from under the building. Then she started to talk! Also, she made a signal with her tail and tiny, miniature cats began to crawl out from under the building. With their tiny feet, they scuttled to stand beside their mom.

“It is time they need to learn about this world,” she meowed.

I gasped. “Y. . .you talked,” I stammered. I looked at the kittens. “Can you talk, too?”

At first, the kittens just looked at each other, then nodded.

I looked at all the cats. My head was whirling with new knowledge.

“What are your names?” I asked bleakly.

“Fuzz,” meowed the orange, fluffy one, “and this is Mikey, Spirit, Socks, and Oreos,” he said as he finished pointing to the other kittens.

“Let’s play instead of chatting,” squeaked Spirit. She leaped at Fuzz, and they rolled and tussled in a play-fight. Soon the other kittens joined, too. Two kittens were scattering leaves and throwing acorns while the others were play-fighting.

All was well until I heard a terrifying cry. Flying above us was a hawk!

I could hear the fierce beating of its wings – kind of like a heartbeat. All of a sudden it swooped down with its talons hooked in a killing way. I dodged just before it could get me. I grabbed a piece of rope and hurled it at the hawk. As the rope slapped the hawk, it let out a painful cry. With a last shriek, it swooped away.

“You need a nap,” the mother finally meowed. She gathered up her kittens and shoved them under the building.

“Good-bye,” I called after them. Those kittens were soft, funny, cute, fun, energetic, and fluffy.

I trekked home. My head was spinning, and I was dazed. Talking cats! I wondered. That day was amazing. I hope that there will be another day like that!

Abigail Gowdy

I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...

## Animal Acquaintance

One day I was walking in the woods with my dog when I spotted a glow coming from the creek. I had never gone all the way to the creek before but, hey, what could possibly go wrong? I ran to the edge of the creek and slowly reached out to touch the glow when I landed with a splash in the water. Finally, I got out of the cold water. I didn't notice any difference, but trust me, there was one.

The next day, I woke up to voices chattering away! I jumped out of bed and sprinted into my parents room only to find them still asleep! How anyone could sleep with all that racket I am not sure. I hurriedly tiptoed over to the window, but the only things I saw outside were animals! I went to the garden and layed in my hammock trying to relax, but the voices were even louder! I sat up and picked some clovers to make into a chain when all of a sudden a voice said, "Are you going to eat those clovers?" I was about to say no when I realized that there was no one near me but a baby bunny. "Did you just talk to me?" I asked the bunny.

"leeeesss...", she replied.

"Do you have a name?", I asked the bunny.

"Yes, it's Bella.", she answered. I put down the clovers so Bella could eat them while I tried to figure out how I could talk to Bella.

Once Bella finished chewing up the clovers, I tried asking her another question, I asked,

"Can you explain to me why all of a sudden I can talk to animals?"

She replied by saying, "Well, the glow you fell into was the glow off the animal princess, Princess Aphrodite, she blessed you with the gift to talk to us animals."

After I got over my state of shock, I began to go around to some other animals and I tried talking with them. I met two field mice named Fred and Fuzzy, two chipmunks named Chip and Dale, and one bird named Tweety. I went back over and sat in my hammock, satisfied with my most recent accomplishment. I was about to doze off when Bella came over to my hammock and started to talk. She said, "Now here is the biggest rule you must follow, you must not tell anyone that you can talk to the animals,

or your power will be taken away, and if you get tired of talking to the animals, just go jump back in the same lake." I nodded my head and went inside.

After breakfast, I went to my room to read when all the racket started up again! Now I know why my parents slept through all the noise, it was because I am the only one who can talk to and hear the animals! I tried to block out the noise by closing my window and sticking my head under the pillow, but the noise penetrated through both the window and the pillow! I put down my book and went to the living room to knit, but I couldn't concentrate. I finally realized that if I ever wanted peace and quiet again, I would have to give up my powers.

So the next day, I went to the woods and saw the glow coming from the lake, but it was very faint. Unsure, I took a few steps back, then I charged into the water. Sadly, I went back to my house, but on the way, I noticed that there were no more human voices going on and on, there was silence.

The next day T and Bella T walked

up to her and said, "Hi."

All Bella did was cock her head and hop off. What Bella said had worked, I couldn't talk to animals anymore.

Abigail Gowdy

**High Hills Elementary  
Sumter County  
Brittany Jackson**

**“I was walking with the animals and talking to the animals...”**

I was walking and talking with the animals last year, and they got me in an adventure that turned for the worst. Let me explain how I got into this mess. You better sit back because this is a long story.

I was really down in the dumps that hot summer day. My dad had to go to war in Iraq. I tried to hold back my tears, but they spilled down my face. Suddenly, I heard a voice. I glanced around, seeing no civilization, but the animals and me. Then I heard it again. It was coming from Satin, a gray wolf. I gazed at Satin, speechless. “It’ll be okay, Melissa,” said Satin soothingly. That broke my trance. “How can you talk?” I asked puzzled. “We always have, you just didn’t listen,” Satin replied. At that very moment, it started to rain. I retreated toward my house. I was focusing really hard, and I didn’t see where I was going because it was so dark as if the moon got scared and hid behind a cloud. I slipped and was rolling down Cipher Mountain, the scariest, dirtiest, and steepest mountain. That was the beginning of my troubles.

As I was rolling down that mountain, my hair was getting gnarled with twigs, mud, and leaves. About 10 minutes later I hit the ground with a THUD! My attire, dirty, and torn, was ruined. I scanned the area for civilization, but I appeared to be in the middle of nowhere. I tried scaling the cliff, but I had no luck. The cliffs were muddy and slippery from the rain. Suddenly, I heard a familiar voice. It was Satin! “Listen Melissa,” he said, “Go find the treasure!” “It will solve your problems, but you must give us something, or you will be cursed for eternity!”

I began my exploration, searching frantically. Satin had said it would change my life. He even said it wasn’t priceless jewels or glimmering gold. Then I saw it, a small, cozy cabin. I dared myself to knock because curiosity grasped my body. A lady appeared, wearing a long, purple dress, with a blood red robe. Her hair was graying. She guided me toward a round table. On the table sat a silvery, majestic orb. She pointed to a chair. I sat, and gazed at the glowing orb. “My dear,” she started, “would you like some wishes?” Her voice was soft, like a new loaf of bread. “Excuse me?” I stammered. “My name is Brandy; I am a magic fortune teller.”

“I am under a curse, I need to give away one more wish, and I’ll be free!” Brandy replied. “Then I wish to be a werewolf, because I want to protect my father in the war,” I said thinking this was all just a ridiculous joke. There was a gust of sparkling wind as my wish was granted, and then everything went still. Brandy had vanished! I raced out of the cabin, into the dark, threatening woods. I crouched down, hearing a voice. “Hello,” I whispered. “Melissa you must remember us,” the voice said, and then it just disappeared.



I started for home, thinking how much my life was miserable. Suddenly, something magnificent caught my eyes!

It was a full moon shining brilliantly under the pale, yellow stars. I had a sudden urge to howl. I tried to stop, but something was controlling me! I looked down at my feet. I screamed. Furry paws replaced my shoes. My body was covered was covered with thick, chocolate brown fur. My nose was now a cold, beady snout. My ears were pointed, and very sensitive. My eyes were colorblind. My snout itched with new smells. My back was arched. I realized I was a werewolf. For a split second I stood there, stunned. I remembered my wish. Suddenly, I remembered Satin. I had forgotten and now I'm cursed. I never should have listened to the animals.

That's how I came to living in a cave. I long to return home, where it's warm and friendly. In a cave, it's the opposite, cold and dark. I know now to be careful what I wish for. I keep looking for Brandy, so I can unwish this terrible wish, but I can't find even a strand of hair. I never saw Satin again either. The only good thing that came out of my wish was that I can now protect my dad. He doesn't deserve to go to Iraq. When he returns, turning back to a human will be the complicated part. I wish I could eliminate that horrible wish.

**Alice Drive Elementary School  
Sumter School District 17  
Margaret Paige Rabon**

## **People in South Carolina Really Like to Go to the Beach**

Do you like the beach? People from South Carolina sure do. That is their number one vacationing place. They like to go to the beach because it is a great place to relax and have fun with friends and family. People from South Carolina really love the beach.

They like feeling the cool breeze from the ocean and feeling the warm sand between their toes. They build castles in the sand and have contests. They like to play games like hopscotch and tag, slipping and sliding all over the sand. They also like to lie down in the sand and feel the warmth of the sun's rays on their backs. They really enjoy playing in the sand.

They also like playing in the ocean. They love to run into the salty spray of the ocean waves, and they enjoy hearing the crash of the waves all around them as they ride to shore on their boogie-boards. After they get tired of riding waves, they can get a float or raft and go out beyond the breaking waves and float around. Playing in the ocean is a very enjoyable thing to do while at the beach.

People from South Carolina really love to look for shells, too. They walk down the beach, their feet sinking into the soft sand, looking for the familiar outline of a shell underneath the sand. If they find one, they dust it off and slip it into a pocket to take home. If they find a conch and take it home, they can always hear the ocean by placing it to their ear. They really enjoy looking for shells.

As they sit on their porches, watching the sun go down, South Carolinians think about how much they love the beach and about how much fun they will have the next day. People in South Carolina really like to go to the beach. They really enjoy those long days of fun in the sun. They want them to last forever. They just love the beach!

**Jonesville Elementary School**  
**Union County**  
**Chaz Roberts**

### **“In South Carolina, people really like to...”**

In South Carolina there are so many things to do; it just depends on where you live and what interests you.

If you live in the mountains you might like to sit outside and watch the sun rise or set. You have the best view of the trees changing colors. You are close to the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina. There are a lot of streams where you can fish for trout. You get to breathe fresh air every day. It seems like the people in the mountain areas live life at a slower pace.

If you live in the piedmont area you might like to go to the lake to fish, swim or even water ski. You can go to the Peach Market in Gaffney and on your way, see the giant peach, a famous landmark, on Interstate I-85. You can also go to Carowinds and do lots of things. You can ride the rides, play in the wave pool or the water works park, see cartoon characters come to life (people dressed up in suits), and stand with one foot in South Carolina and one in North Carolina at the same time.

If you live in the coastal plains you can go see the Carolina Gamecocks play at Williams-Brice Stadium. You can go see the animals at Riverbanks Zoo. You can go skiing at Lake Murray or go fishing for catfish at the world famous Santee-Cooper Lake.

At the coast, you can go to Charleston and see the new bridge or go to The Battery and sit on the seawall and see the big ships. You can also visit Fort Sumter where you can see history come alive. You can go to Myrtle Beach and play in the sand and ocean. You can eat some of the best seafood in the world. You can do my favorite thing which is ride all the rides at the Pavilion!

So, from the mountains to the coast and everywhere in between, South Carolina is a fun place to be and live. Like the car tag says: “South Carolina: Smiling Faces and Beautiful Places”.

**Chavis Elementary School  
Williamsburg County School District  
Adasha Pope**

**When you are 80 years old, what will your life be like?**

When I am 80 years old, my life will be breathtaking. I could look back and see all of the magnificent things that I have accomplished. By the time that I am 80 years old I hope to have made a difference in this crime-filled world by going over to Africa and helping the homeless and hungry babies, children, and adults. Sometimes people forget about those hurting over in far off countries but I know that it is important to help them.

I hope to have at least two bright, smart, yet sophisticated children who make a difference also. I think knowledge is the key to success. Everybody has a chance in learning and I will make sure that my children get an excellent education. I believe that by the time that I am 80 I will also have done alot of Pediatric work. My main goal is to have a great life, family, and career. I would love to see how I made a difference in a patient's life.

Being 80 years old, I sure do anticipate that I will be healthy and robust. To be healthy I should eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, lots of oranges and green things, and take my vitamins. I eat mainly junk that isn't good for my body now but I will change that before it is too late! Being 80 may be a blast if I live to see it. I really would like to live and see myself at the age 80 and how I have matured

from a baby, infant and child into a wise and clever senior citizen. Boy, I sure do hope to live to see 80 years old! I pray God allows me to live that long, if he does I would be so amazed and I promise to live my life to the fullest!!!

**Hunter Street Elementary School  
York County  
Rebecca Robinson**

**I Was Walking with the Animals and Talking to the Animals....**

“Yes!” cried Anna Chang as the school bell rang. “Summer Vacation!” “See ya’ next year, Anna,” said Cole Shin, the cutest boy in school. Anna had heard that most of her friends were going to Disney World, but where Anna was going was way cooler than that. Anna was shipping herself off to Africa! Anna had begged her mom for months for them to go to Africa, and her mom couldn’t take it, and finally gave in. “Wait,” Anna told her friends. “I have to go do something, somewhere, somehow, some... okay, bye.” Anna strolled back to her fourth grade classroom and peered in. It was empty. “It’s just so hard to say goodbye,” Anna thought. She was going to miss Mrs. Sanchez so much, but she was still so excited! Since her parents were divorced, Anna lived with her mom. But still, her dad would be going with them to Africa.

When they got there, her parents started fighting before Anna had time to blink. For some strange reason, they were fighting over who got her for Christmas or something. Anna was so tired of it. She decided to test something. She would run away, and she bet they wouldn’t even notice. So she reached a jungle. Suddenly, she forgot where she was. She felt a wave of joy sweep over her. She walked into the jungle and looked back. She wanted to see if her test had worked. It had, of course, they were still griping about something. Anna kept walking until she slipped on something. She looked down, and saw a stone. It was olive green, smooth, and in the middle was a swirly white blob in the shape of a heart. Anna picked it up, put it into her pocket, and hurried off.

After running for about six minutes, she was panting like a wet dog. She stopped and looked around. She was surrounded by dozens of screeching animals! They were all crowding in closer, speaking their animal language. Suddenly, Anna remembered the stone. She had wanted to study it a little bit more. She took it out of her pocket, and as soon as she did she heard, “Love! Love! Love! Love! Love! Love!” Anna was astonished. It was the animals! Finally, Anna heard a deep voice. “Love is what you’ve been searching for, but the love is in your heart.” She turned to see a towering gorilla.

"Hear what I say, child! The love is in your heart." All of a sudden, Anna knew what the stone did! She was so excited. She turned around, and dashed out of the woods toward her parents. When she got there, they weren't complaining anymore. They had permanent smiles plastered on their faces. "We made up," they whispered, almost not saying anything. They reached out to hug her. She jumped into their arms and hugged them so tight that she almost cut off their circulation! As Anna snuggled in their arms, she softly whispered, "I guess some stories do have happy endings!" And she smiled her biggest smile!

**Clover Middle School  
York County  
Sydney Burrell**

**“I was walking and talking with the animals...”**

I was going on a forest expedition. I couldn't wait to see the forest! All the trees and animals were unimaginable! I found an old tree with a fork. As I climbed, the animals stared at me with odd expressions. When I got to the fork, I stopped to take out my binoculars. I gazed at the forest floor below me. “Hello!” a voice screamed. I whizzed around, finding just a small squirrel. “Hello!” he said again. I screamed. “Who are you?” I cried, not knowing if it was real or if I was going crazy. “I’m Nut,” he replied “and these are my brothers, Acorn, Cashew, Peanut, and my sister Raisin. I turned around again to see 4 more squirrels waving at me. At this point I thought I was dreaming. “How can you understand me?” I asked. “No,” Raisin said, “How can you understand us?”

We concluded it was magic. I was so excited that I could not only look at the animals, but that I could talk to them too. The squirrels introduced me to the birds, Blue and Jay. I was then introduced to the chipmunks, Nutty and Stripe. I was finally introduced to the deer, Mitch and White. We decided to complete the expedition together. We started off on an amazing journey. With the chipmunks and squirrels on my back, the deer beside me, and the birds flying over me, I was as happy as a winning football team. The animals gave me a tour of the forest. We came to a small pond in the center of the forest. It was very profound. “It’s gorgeous!” I gasped. The water was clear like glass. Water lilies grew all around. Lily pads with croaking frogs were scattered all over the water. It was a dream come true! I curiously walked to the water. The frogs croaked a beautiful melody, as if they were singing a song of welcome. I sat down at a tree and watched the animals play in the pond. Before I knew it, I was fast asleep due to fatigue.

I woke up with all my animal friends around me. We started back up our journey as if it had never stopped. As we walked the dry paths of the forest, we heard a sound. “VROOOOOM!” We stopped dead in our tracks. Blue shivered. “That is our languor,” Jay said, “But we have no idea what it is.” Mitch signaled for us to follow. We ran up a hidden path, leaves crunching beneath our feet. We peered through a thick bush. We could see 3 vast bulldozers, and I explained what they were. We watched as they cut down trees and animals scattered. I watched in horror as animals were almost killed by the big machines. We ran back to the pond. I told my friends that the workers were making new houses. I told them they might have to leave. Acorn cried and Stripe whimpered. We decided to go back to the fork in the tree. We played games and sang songs. But soon, it got dark. I decided to go home. As I left, I promised my friends I’d stop the bulldozers.

I left for town the next morning. I walked to Town Hall. I spoke to Mayor Patterson. I told her what the animals were going through. I showed her pictures of the site. I begged that she stop the construction. The next day, she finally did. New trees were planted and the forest was now protected. I was so happy I could help my forest friends.



Lesslie Elementary  
York County  
Maggie Adkins

**Your little brother or sister is starting kindergarten next year. What advice would you give him or her about attending school?**

“Rule # 26: Never get physical. Rule #27: If someone says ‘Pinch me, I’m dreaming! Don’t pinch them! Rule #28: The teacher is always right! Rule #29: Never talk back to the teacher. And most importantly, Rule #30: Never, EVER wet your pants!! Understand??” Junior nodded.

Shivers went down my spine. I remember starting kindergarten. My brother, Tucker’s rules only went to #29. That was the bad thing. My name is Maggie, Maggie Adkins. I have this littler brother, Junior, who is always getting into trouble. “So remember, Junior, don’t do those things,” I said. I had hope in him. At least, I hoped I had hope in him.

In the morning, I went over it with him one more time after his dream of flying purple hippos doing the hula. He stuffed his mouth with his Cinnamon Toast Crunch. “Now remember,” I said, “don’t ever, EVER---.” It was time to leave. He might remember...

We got a call from the principal. “We need to talk to you. It’s about Junior.” It was so quiet. What could he have done? Did he remember the rules? By the time we got there, my hands were shaking like a hairless monkey in the middle of a blizzard. I could see that Mom was scared, too. I never thought that I would have to go to the principal’s office. We sat down in the big, red, leather, chairs. Then, the principal started talking.

“You have a wonderful son!!” she said, smiling. “What?!” Mom and I both said at the same time, shocked! We thought he was in trouble. The principal told us how he didn’t get physical, he didn’t pinch anyone, and was polite to his teacher. “There’s just one problem,” she said, “he had a little...um...” Junior stepped into the room. His pants were soaking wet! He sighed, “Rule #30: Never, EVER wet your pants,” he recited.

**Gold Hill Elementary School  
York County  
Sally Frost**

**I was Walking and Talking with the Animals....**

I was walking with the animals and I was talking with the animals, in the ink of my quill as it flowed across the page. The words were magical and making their own world. Many pictures formed in my mind. Elephants and camels roamed across a golden desert; jewels, gold, and riches embedded on their backs, sparkling in the sun. A hippopotamus bathed in brown, chocolate colored mud in a clearing with dew on the grass and on the leaves on the trees. As the first rays of sunlight seeped through the leaves, butterflies danced on the light as if it was a golden flower. The images came to me like rain, dropping on my head and settling in my blonde hair as if it was a nest.

I flew with the animals and I chattered with the animals. I saw birds in my mind like swooping leaves on a windy autumn day. A bald eagle perched on a cliff, his eyes scanning the ground for rodents and snakes. His head twitched in coldness and hunger for it was winter time and food was scarce. A humming bird swiftly flew to the nearest honey suckle smelling it's sweet sensational scent. The humming bird's wings sparkled as the sun's rays faded away.

I swam with the animals and I gurgled with the animals. Images of the creatures of the deep started to collect into puddles in my mind. A clownfish quickly swam into a patch of sea anemone as a great white shark swam by. The great predator's shadows loomed above the small fish, who shuddered in fright. A dolphin mother and her baby jumped above the ocean as the sun started to rise. Their shiny skin gleams as the sun's light swallowed them whole. As the pair dove through the waves, the mother nuzzled her child. The rain on my head is settling now and it is time to put my quill away. Now I sleep with the animals.